A

TREATISE

OF

Rejoycing in the Lord Jesus in all Cases and Conditions.

Wherein is manifested,

1. What the Lord Jesus Christ is to, and doth for Believing Souls; which may be a constant ground of their Joy and Rejoycing.
2. What are the grounds of that Darkness which is upon Believers about their Interest in Christ, hindering this Rejoycing.
3. What Believers should do in the interim, until they can have the evidence of their Interest clear.
4. How Souls may know their Interest in Jesus Christ.

Together with

A Christians Hope in Heaven, in one Sermon, and Freedom from Condemnation in Christ, in two Sermons, being the last Preached.

By *Robert Asty*, late Minister of Jesus Christ in *Norwich*.

Phil. 4. 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoyce.*

LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Snowden*, for *Edward Giles* Bookseller in *Norwich*, near the Market-place. 1683.

A

TREATISE

OF

Relying in the Lord Jesus

in all Conditions.

Wherein is manifested,

1. What the Soul is to, and doth for
Believing Soulsweet
or their Joy and
2. What are the pro
upon Believers ab
binding this Re
3. What Believers have to do in the interim, until
they can have the evidences cleared.
4. How Souls may have their Interest in Jesus
Christ.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To which is added

A Christian's Hope in Heaven, a Sermon. And a Treatise
from Condemnation in two Sermons, being the
last Part of

Psal. 4. 4. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

Printed by T. Parkhurst, for

TO THE

Congregational Church of Chriſt

In the City of *Norwich.*

Dearly Beloved,

IT is much to be lamented in any day, if many of the righteous are taken away by death (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) as being ſignal of evil to come; & more, when many Eminent Miniſters of the Goſpel are ſo removed, whereby Viſion faileth; and moſt of all, when the Sin of a People, and impending Judgment threaten their being benighted, and no proſpect is given of others to fill up the places of thoſe who are tranſplanted to Eternity.

I know you cannot but have many ſearchings of heart, for your deep ſhare in this matter of Lamentation; the Lord having (in ſo ſhort a meaſure of time) called home to himſelf from among you, ſo many faithful Teachers; as that Spiritual man Mr. *Armitage*, Judicious Mr. *Allen*, and now this Laborious Mr. *Aſty*, who ſerved you in the Goſpel: But it is ſome matter of refreſhment, that they being dead, yet (by their Printed Labours) they ſtill ſpeak to you.

It was the earneſt deſire of ſome amongſt you, that the enſuing Sermons of Mr. *Robert Aſty* might be Publiſhed; they were taken from his mouth by the Pen of a Ready Writer, and not poliſhed by his own hand, yet may be exceedingly uſeful to all, for the promoting of Faith, Obedience and Comfort.

Indeed, the chief purport of this Tre*atiſe*

Treatiſe is, to raiſe the Joy of thoſe who are intereſted in Chriſt, and that in every ſtate and condition: It directeth unto the right Object of Joy, the Lord, and ſo to an everlaſting ground of Rejoycing.

I ſhall add a few words of Counſel to you, for whom I have a great reſpect.

1. Improve the remembrance of thoſe Goſpel Truths which you heard from the mouths of your Miniſters now at reſt: Their Labours were not intended by the Lord only for a preſent relief to your Souls during their ſpeaking, but for afterward, *Rev.* 3. 3.

Remember how thou haſt Received and Heard, and hold faſt. Beware of loſing or growing indifferent as to the practical owning thoſe Goſpel Principles which you

have been grounded in; be tenacious there; hold them faſt; for Chriſt addeth, *If thou ſhalt not watch, I will come on thee as a Thief, and thou ſhalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

2. Keep up lively Affections towards God, when your Goſpel-Miniſters are withdrawn from you. When *David* was exiled from the Ordinances of God, yet then had he the moſt earneſt pantings of Soul after Enjoyments of God, *Pſal.* 42. 1, 2. & 63. 1, 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee* — Beware of coolings in Affection to the Inſtitutions of Jeſus Chriſt when you want them, and let nothing ſhort of God ſatisfie when you enjoy them. Beware of leaving your firſt love, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5.

3. Main-

3. Maintain frequent Spiritual Communion each with other when ſome Goſpel Adminiſtrations are wanted. This is preſcribed as a means for the prevention of Declinings or Departures from God, *Heb.* 3. 13. *Exhort one another daily while it is called to day.* Daily Converſes each with other duly managed, may not only preſerve from Spiritual Decaies, but quicken Affections, and blow up the ſpark of your graces into a mighty flame.

4. Wait unceſſantly in Prayer for the Return of God's Ark to you. The leſs you have of Preaching, the more ſhould you be in Praying, and others for you, that Goſpel-Light may ſhine among you as in former daies; and the Anſwer will rejoyce many, and ſhould grieve none; for, what hurt

hurt can it be to any real Christian, that Christ is Preached to others?

I shall only add 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. *Finally Brethren, farewel, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you.* So prayeth he who is

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

October. 23. 1681.

Sam. Petto.

SERMON

SERMON I.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, *I will joy in the God of my Salvation.*

OF the Stock and Parentage of this Prophet, we have no clear account in Scripture. It may be, implicitly to hint unto us, that we ſhould alwaies look more to the Meſſage than to the Meſſenger, and that nobleneſs of birth and greatneſs among men do not greaten the Word of God. Indeed *Epiphanius* tells us with ſome confidence, that this Prophet was of the Tribe of *Simeon*, and that he lived in the time of the Babyloniſh Captivity; but there is but little grounds for this conjecture. The time alſo of this Prophet's Propheſying, is very uncertain. Some *Hebrew* Writers do expreſly tell us, that he lived in the time of the Reign of King *Manaſſeh*; and there is ſome probability for this aſſertion; but however this is clear, that he comes from the Lord of Hoſts; he was his Prophet, and he ſpeaks in his name, in much power and plainneſs to this people, not fearing the face of man, and ſpares not to deal cloſely with that incorrigible Spirit that was among them; who had ſlighted the Lord's Meſſage that was delivered by his Predeceſſors before him, and was now near unto deſtruction: Whether it was in the time of the Reign of *Manaſſeh*, or any

other King, modern Expoſitors are very modeſt in their conjectures and apprehenſions, not ſeeing the thing clearly and abſolutely determined in Scripture; but this is certain, it was at that time when God was about to raiſe up that bitter, ſharp, cruel, fiery, fierce enemy the *Chaldeans*, to come out againſt this people; as you may ſee, *chap.* 1. *v.* 6. It was at that time, when God had born ſo long with their provocations, that the time of his patience was even almoſt expired. It was at that time when their ſins were ſo multiplied and encreaſed, as that they were near unto ruin; deſtruction and deſolation was at the door. Now this Prophet underſtanding the mind of God, and ſeeing upon good grounds that the Decree was paſt againſt this people, as one who was faithful unto their intereſt, among whom, and unto whom he was the Lords Prophet, & as one that would approve himſelf faithful unto the Lord; he takes upon him the boldneſs to expoſtulate the caſe with God, why he ſhould ſuffer ſuch a wicked and vile Nation as the *Chaldeans* were, to prevail and proſper againſt his own inheritance, though they were ſinful and unworthy; and he cannot reſt, neither can he give God any reſt, until he hear ſomething further of his mind. The Lord is pleaſed to condeſcend to him in the beginning of the ſecond chapter, and to make anſwer to the anxiouſneſs and earneſtneſs of his Spirit in this great affair at the ſecond verſe: *And the Lord anſwered me and ſaid, Write the Viſion, and make it plain upon Tables, that he that runs may read it.* Verſe 3. *For the Viſion is for an appointed time, at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and ſhall not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, and not tarry.* In ſhort, the Lord

makes

makes this Anſwer to him, that though he did make uſe of the *Caldeans* as a Rod in his hand to ſcourge his own People with, yet when he had done his work upon his *Iſrael*, he would take his Rod, and throw it into the fire, that he would deal with all the Enemies of his People according to their deſert. Deſolation might come for a while upon the Lord's People, but they ſhould be raiſed out of their ruins; but utter deſolation and deſtruction ſhould come upon the Enemies of his People; they ſhould at length be brought down, and ſuffered to riſe no more. In this third Chapter (according to his name, which ſignifies (*Wreſtler*) he wreſtles with God, and is another *Jacob* that will not let the Lord alone until he bleſs him.

Habakkuk encompaſſeth God, and in his prayer wreſtling with him, cloſed in upon him. And he gathers up in this third Chapter the great Experiences that *Iſrael* had of God, when he walked with them, and led them by a ſtrong hand in the wilderneſs; and he urged thoſe old Experiences that this People had of God upon God, at this time; how he had dried up the mighty waters, and rode in Chariots of Salvation through the Sea for them; and how he cauſed the Sun and the Moon to ſtand ſtill, until the Enemies of the Lord were cut off & conſumed. And he gathers in upon God upon thoſe Experiences, waiting for the ſame power, and the ſame wonderful appearances and actings for their deliverances out of the preſent and ſucceeding troubles that were, or ſhould come upon them; as God had appeared for them, and delivered them out of all their troubles of old. And though he tells us, that at the firſt ſounding of the words of God's

diſpleaſure, he was *filled with ſhakings, and with trembling, and with quivering*; yet within a little time he recovered his Spirit, and in the exerciſe of Faith upon God, he glories, rejoyces and triumphs in God alone in the midſt of moſt ſinking, moſt diſcouraging Providences: *When indeed I heard*, ſaies he, *verſe* 16. *my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice; rottenneſs entred into my bones.* But ſee what he ſaies in the 17th and 18th verſes; *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom*, &c. *yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* He ſaw ſhakings coming upon the whole Earth, that did even put the Foundations as it were out of courſe; he ſaw God's Beſom in his hand ready to ſweep away all their comforts; an Eaſt-wind was riſing, that would blow upon their Spring, and make all their Spring-buds to blow off. Well, ſaies he, let it be ſo, or as ill as can be ſuppoſed to be, or as ill as the creature can be as to its ſtate in this world, yet I have God on my ſide, and all is well: *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* This verſe is a moſt noble ſtrain of a heavenly Spirit in the high and conſtraining exerciſe of Faith upon God in a moſt diſmal day of darkneſs. The Prophet gets upon the Ruins of the Creature, and rejoyceth in his whole Chriſt: He gets upon the Aſhes of his houſe that was burnt here, and ſings of his Building that cannot be burnt in Heaven: He gets into his withered Vineyard, and into his barren Fields, and there ſings, *The Lines are fallen unto me in a pleaſant place, I have a goodly Heritage.* It ſeems a very ſtrange ſpeech, that he ſhould in the former part of his Prophecy be ſpeaking of the ſad diſpenſations of

the

the Lord towards them; and *cap.* 3. 17. ſpeak of great failures that were like to come upon them in reference to all their terrene comforts and enjoyments, and yet ſpeak of rejoycing and joying in the Lord! It is a ſtrange ſpeech to talk of joy and rejoycing here, where he had almoſt nothing in this world left him, or ſuppoſed to be left him, *yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* We ſay of ſome men, It is ſtrange how they live, their Trades fail, and their Eſtates are gone, and yet they bear up: Why, 'tis a myſtery how they live, how they have wherewithal to defray their charges; ſurely they have ſome ſecret friends that feed them, and maintain them, that their neighbours know not of. Why, after the ſame manner we may ſpeak concerning the Lord's People; They have enemies on every ſide, and they are broken again and again, and yet behold they live, and their Joy none can take from them; although they are numbered to ſorrows and diſtreſſes every day: Why, my Text tells you the myſtery of their living, and of their living in joy, and peace, and comfort in the midſt of all their loſſes, & troubles, and diſcomfortures. *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* Saies the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As ſorrowful, yet alwaies rejoycing*, &c. This verſe doth open ſomething of the myſtery of the verſe that we have choſen to be our preſent Text; *As ſorrowful, yet alwaies rejoycing*; and while *they ſeem to be poor, they make many rich; they ſeem to have nothing, but yet indeed they poſſeſs all things*; yet *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* [*I will rejoyce in the Lord.*] The word in the Hebrew is a very full

word. I will rejoyce exceedingly in the Lord: Or, My heart riſes like the Sea with ſurges when 'tis enforced with the wind: Or, My heart is like a boiling Pot when it ſeetheth: Or, (how ſhall I expreſs it!) I will rejoyce in the Lord; I will magnifie my ſelf in God, or make my boaſt of God in all diſaſters, and under all diſcouragements. I will joy in the God of my Salvation. [*I will joy*] That word alſo is very full, and it ſignifies in its grammatical ſenſe, my heart ſhall leap or skip for joy: My heart ſhall ſally forth in my God, and take heart in the Lord who never fails: *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* One of the Antients ſpeaking upon this Text, ſaith, Although, ſaith he, all the Elements ſhould threaten us, and conſpire and ſwear as it were a Confederacy againſt us, to turn us out of all, yet, *Ego exultabo in Deo; I will rejoyce in my God, even in the God of my Salvation.* And *Calvin* ſaith, My joy is not founded upon the Creature, nor upon external enjoyments, therefore let all things be brought into confuſion here below; nay, let God himſelf ſeem to ſtand frowning over us, yet ſaies he, *will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.*

Joy is the ſweet motion of the Soul in a full contentment of heart, and complacency of Spirit upon ſome good ſet before it. Now here the Prophet ſees all diſcouraging below, he turns his Eyes up to Heaven, and he ſees a certainty there, he ſees ſtability there, and therefore he rejoyces in the Lord, and Joys in the God of his Salvation, *I will rejoice in the Lord.* Who is meant by Lord here? I will rejoyce in *Jehovah* the God of my Salvation. *Jehovah* is a Title given unto God the Father, ſet-

ſetting forth his ſelf-being, and ſelf-ſufficiency, and giving exiſtence unto all Creatures, but the Title *Jehovah* is attributed alſo unto the Son, and ſo I underſtand it here in this Text, I will rejoice in *Jehovah*, that is in Chriſt Jeſus, who may be called *Jehovah*; not only as he hath a ſufficiency in himſelf, but as he gives exiſtence, and being unto all the promiſes of the Covenant of Grace, in whom they are yea, and Amen: and on this account I take it that the Title *Jehovah* is often given unto Jeſus Chriſt the ſecond Perſon. *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation*, that is, in my Lord my Saviour, my dear Jeſus, and my Redeemer, and ſo from the words you may obſerve this propoſition:

Doct. *That there is enough in Chriſt Jeſus alone for the Souls full rejoycing and triumph in all caſes and conditions.* Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation. Let things go how they will in the world as to my outward Concerns, yet the ground of my joy, that is never taken from me. *Although the Fig-tree do not bloſſom, although there ſhall be no fruit in the Vine, although the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the Fields ſhall yield no meat, the Flocks ſhall be cut off from the Fold, and there ſhall be no Herd in the Stall*; yet my Joy that abides, the ground of my Joy that cannot be taken from me, 'tis not in the Creature, 'tis not upon Earth, but 'tis in Heaven, 'tis not in Man, 'tis in the Lord, 'tis not in the confluence of theſe things that are coming and going, and in an uncertain enjoyment, but it is in the Lord who never fails, ſaies *David* in the 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Though my Houſe be not ſo with God*; my Family is not as I would have it to be; I

cannot rectify all the diſorders of my Houſe, and ſettle things as I would, my houſe is not with God as I would have it according to my hearts deſire; yet *God hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant of* Grace, *and this is all my Salvation and all my deſire.* The word that is tranſlated *deſire* here in the Hebrew ſignifies alſo delight, this is all my Salvation, and all my delight as we may read it; here is the Joy of my heart, my delight is here, Gods Covenant of Grace ſtands ſure with me, and therein will I rejoyce; as if *David* had ſaid, things go ill with me here below; the Sword is threatned never to depart from my Houſe while I live, that I muſt be a man of trouble and of war to the end of my daies; what breaches may be made upon my Kingdom; and what breeches may be made in my Family, the Lord only knows, yet the Covenant that ſtands ſure, and that is all my delight, my heart centers here, and I will comfort my ſelf in the Lord my God. And if we ſearch into the *Pſalms*, there we ſhall find that *David* does frequently under great diſaſters make his boaſt of God. Providences were frowning, and he ſeemed to be driven out of all, yet ſaies he, *The Lord God is my refuge, he is the Horn of my Salvation, my Sanctuary, and high Tower, and I will rejoyce*, and let all the righteous rejoice and be glad in him.

In the handling of this propoſition there are theſe things that we ſhall propoſe to conſider and unfold to you.

Firſt, What Jeſus Chriſt is. Secondly, What he hath, and Thirdly, What he will do for the believing Soul, that the believer may take comfort, and rejoyce in him at all times, whatſoever his condition is.

Firſt,

First, What Jesus Christ is, that the Prophet doth here so comfort himself in, and rejoice and make his boast of.

First, He is glorious in his Person, a very glorious person he is, not one like him in Heaven nor in Earth; what is said concerning *Saul* in the 1 *Sam.* 9. 2. we may in allusion apply unto Christ, that he was a choice young man & a goodly, there was not among the Children of *Israel* a goodlier Person then he, from the shoulders upward he was higher than any of the People. I only allude to it.

Jesus Christ is a most choice excellent one, a very goodly, and a very lovely Person, he is higher both by head and shoulders than any of his Brethren; a Person all glorious, a Person all over lovely and beautiful, in *Can.* 5. 16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely, this is my beloved,* &c.

But I shall descend into particulars, and shew you wherein Jesus Christ is such a sufficient ground of rejoycing, and of comfort to the believing Soul that hath an interest in him in all conditions, and I shall here shew you wherein it appeareth, that the glory of Christs Person is such a ground of rejoycing to us at all times? And that will appear in his Mediatory Constitution, as God-man in one Person; Jesus is a Mediator, a days Man, an umpire between God and Man, one that hath come between God and Man to make peace for us, and the glory of his Person lies in his mediatory constitution, as he is God-man, so he is a most glorious Person. Now this Title of Mediator is often given him in Scripture, in *Heb.* 8. 6. he is called *the Mediator of a better Covenant*, & *Heb.* 9. 15. *the Mediator of the New Testament*, and *Heb.* 12. 24. *To Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant*,

nant, and to the blood of ſprinkling. So 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. This was ſuch a one as *Job* wiſhed for, in *Job* 9. 33. *Neither is there any days-man between us that might lay his hand upon us both.* Now there are two things that are requiſite for the compleating and accompliſhing of a Mediator.

Firſt, He muſt be equally related to the Perſons between whom he comes.

Secondly, He muſt be impartial and faithfully indifferent; now both theſe are found in Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt, A Mediator, I ſay muſt be equally ſtated between, and related to the Perſons, that he comes to reconcile. A Mediator muſt be a middle Perſon that muſt not be related more to one Perſon than to another, that he comes between, but there muſt be an equal proximity or nearneſs in him unto the parties, that he comes to mediate for, or to make peace between. Now Jeſus Chriſt was ſuch a Perſon in whom there was an equal proximity or nearneſs to both parties that he had to do with, for he was both God and Man; as he was true Man, he ſtood in a nearneſs unto man, and as he was true God, ſo he ſtood in a nearneſs unto the Father that he had to do for; he was by the Divine Nature as near unto the Father, as by the Humane Nature he was near unto man; and he was as near unto man by his Humane Nature, as he was unto the Father by his Divine Nature, ſo as he is equally ſtated between, and related unto the perſons that he came to reconcile.

Secondly, A Mediator muſt be impartial and faithful, indifferent in and about the intereſt of the parties that he hath to do for. Jeſus Chriſt being made God-man, was not only in a nearneſs to man,

man, and to the Father, but he was thereby unbiaſſed, and carried out upon equal terms impartially, to manage the Concerns of the Intereſt of both Parties; he was both God and man, and was not only as ſo, in a nearneſs to both Parties, but he was equally concerned honourably to manage the Intereſt of both Parties that he came between and had to do for, and was engaged in this nearneſs that he ſtood in unto both; he was engaged thereby equally to manage the Concerns of both Parties; being God, he was engaged in point of honour to give ſatisfaction to his Father; and being Man, he was engaged in point of faithfulneſs to work out the whole buſineſs and concern of our Salvation, and to make peace for Sinners; he was faithfully indifferent, and equally concerned in the Intereſt of both Parties, having the Divine Nature and the Humane united together in one Perſon; both Natures do conſtrain him to have an equal and right aſpect into both Intereſts; if he ſhould look more unto God's ſide, than unto man's ſide, the Humane Nature would ſpeak; and if he ſhould look more unto man than unto God, the Divine Nature would ſpeak; he had both Natures, and therein was unbiaſſed, and carried out with an impartial ſpirit to manage the Concerns of both Intereſts, and to bring them into one; and it was requiſite that Jeſus that was to be a Mediator, ſhould be thus conſtituted; for indeed, had he undertook the work, and had not been thus conſtituted, it would not probably have been ſo impartially managed, neither could Jeſus Chriſt have been compleat for the work of his Mediation, but under this conſtitution; for if he had been God only, then he had been too high for

the

the work; for he muſt make ſatisfaction; he muſt ſuffer and die for Sinners; he muſt be made ſin for Sinners, and be ſubſtituted in the room of ſinners. Now God abſolutely conſidered, cannot be thus: And if he had been man only, he had been too low for the work; for there could not have been that dignity in his ſufferings, as to give a value and worth to all his layings out, and layings down for us: He muſt therefore be God-man, and as ſo, he was neither too high, nor too low, but equally ſtated between both, and ſo compleated for the work; and thus was Jeſus Chriſt conſtituted; and thus do the Scriptures ſet him forth to us as Mediator, *Joh.* 1. 14. *The Word,* that is, the Second Perſon was made fleſh; there is Jeſus becoming *Immanuel,* God with us; and 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. God was manifeſt in the fleſh, *&c.* and *Luk.* 1. 31, 32. *And behold thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and ſhalt call his name Jeſus.* And *Rom.* 1. 3, 4. *Concerning his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, which was made of the ſeed of* David, *according to the fleſh, and declared to be the Son of God with power,* &c. So as you ſee he was conſtituted God-man; *The Word was made fleſh.* Now being thus conſtituted God-man, he had his nearneſs to God the Father, and his nearneſs to the Sons of men, for whom he came and appeared in the fleſh. You may ſee his nearneſs unto the Father, *Zech.* 13. 7. *Awake O Sword againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* So as Jeſus Chriſt he is, and he was the fellow and the companion of the Lord of Hoſts. So *Phil.* 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God,* &c. Here you ſee he hath his

nearneſs

nearneſs to the Father, and alſo his nearneſs to the Sons of men, for whom he appeared in the Fleſh, *Heb.*2.14.*For as much then as the Children are partakers of fleſh & blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame*,&c.and in *Iſaiah* 9.6.*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*, &c. and *Luke* 1. 35. *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee, therefore alſo that holy thing that ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God*; he thought it no robbery to be equal with God; there was his nearneſs to the Father, and he was born of the Virgin, and ſo clothed with our fleſh, and therein he was near a kin unto man, and hence is he called *Immanuel*, that is, God with us;now as thus conſtituted, did he undertake the work of his mediation, for thus he ſuffered, and thus he ſatisfied, his ſufferings hereby came to be ſatisfactory as he was God, he died as man, and he overcame death, and aroſe again from the Grave, by the power of his God-Head.

Queſt. *But you will ſay this indeed is a great myſtery, worthy of all admiration, that the Eternal Son of God ſhould become man, that he ſhould be God and Man, that there ſhould be a union of the two natures in one Perſon, but what is this to us, as a ſtanding conſtant ground of rejoycing to us in all ſaddening, ſinking providences whatſoever?*

Anſ. I anſwer much every way, and this would be clear to you, ſhould I enter upon, and open to you the glory of his Perſon as thus conſtituted. The glorious excellencies of Heaven that are ſhining in both natures, or upon his Per-

Perſon under its conſtitution in the union of both natures, and there may be a greater matter of rejoycing to our Souls in the exerciſe of faith in our contemplating upon his perſonal glories. It may be a matter of greater rejoycing to our Souls, than ever there was ſatisfaction to the heart and mind upon any object whatſoever it did behold with a bodily eye; but I ſhall not go that way, nor enter upon ſuch a prolix diſcourſe, but ſhall only give you ſome particulars wherein there is a ſtanding ground of rejoycing for us in Chriſt Jeſus upon this his perſonal conſtitution, as God-man to be a Mediator for us; and here,

Firſt, *We have dignity.*
Secondly, *Tranquillity.*
Thirdly, *Sanctity.*
Fourthly, *Stability.* And
Fifthly, *Familiarity* given to us, or brought in upon us.

1. *Hereby is the nature of man raiſed unto unſpeakable honour and glory*, in that Jeſus Chriſt the Second Perſon hath aſſumed our nature, and taken it into union with his own divine nature in his Perſon, & therein does he now reign upon the Throne in Heaven, at the right hand of God, herein is the nature of man moſt unſpeakably advanced and dignifyed. The nature of man was very low before; Man was made of the earth, of a little red earth, man was before but a contemptible Creature, but now what honour is put upon it, that Jeſus Chriſt hath taken our nature, and united it unto the Divine nature, that nature that was deſpiſed be-

be-

fore, is now honoured, honourable and worthy. It hath glory and dignity from the Lord Jeſus put upon it, ſaies the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43, 44. The body of man, or the nature of man it is both born, and it dies in *diſhonour*, ay, but *it is raiſed in glory*. The body of Man is a corruptible body, 'tis a dying body. It hath a ſentence of death that hangs over it as ſoon as ever it hath a being; but now though it be *ſown in diſhonour, yet it ſhall be raiſed in glory*; there is glory that waits upon the body of man, or upon mans whole nature, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like to his own glorious body*, &c. So as there is unſpeakable honour that is given unto our nature, in that Chriſt Jeſus hath taken it ſo near unto himſelf, and advanced it upon the Fathers Throne in Heaven; we are here under the contempt and diſgrace of men, but it matters not (Chriſtians) they cannot take away your glory. The glory of your nature is not laid in the breath of men, but it is founded here in Chriſt Jeſus's aſſumption of our nature, and uniting it to the divine nature; and if indeed the enemies of the Lords people could take our nature from Chriſt Jeſus, then they might take away our glory, and our honour; but he hath inſeparably and everlaſtingly united our nature unto his divine nature, therefore our honour is ſuch, as can never be taken away; it is counted a great honour for an Ambaſſadour to be ſent forth in the name of ſome great Prince to perſonate him in another Country, but my friends what is it for Jeſus Chriſt to aſſume our

nature.

nature, and to perſonate man before his Father in Heaven; this is a greater honour that is put upon us, than if God had made man the Lord of all the Angels in Heaven, therefore let this ſatisfy you under all the reproaches and contempts that you meet withall here in the world by one and another, though deſpiſed, and though contemned here and there by a few, yet your honour in the Lord, that abides.

2. *In and upon the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt as Mediator for us, there is a full, firm and laſting peace made between God and us.* Jeſus Chriſt he came as a Mediator between two to reconcile both, and make them one, and this he hath done *by the blood of his Croſs*, *Col.* 1. 20. and 21. Jeſus hath reconciled God and Man together, he hath taken away the wrath that the law of God had to denounce againſt man, he hath ſlain the enmity of our natures, he hath brought theſe two enemies together, and made them one in his own mediatory hand, ſo as now you may look unto God, and be at peace with him, you may ſee Heaven, and all the powers of Heaven reconciled to you, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Therefore being juſtified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and not only ſo, *v.* 11. *But we alſo Joy in God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt by whom we have received the attonement*: here is the bleſſing mentioned in the Text, *I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation*, but how muſt I conſider him? why, conſider this Lord as Mediator, making peace through the blood of his Croſs, and then Chriſtians you may Joy in God through our Lord Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe it is by him that you have received the attonement, Jeſus Chriſt hath ſatisfied and reconciled God to you, he hath appeaſed God, he hath brought over the heart of God to the ſinner, that now he may take comfort and encouragement in him, and go to him as to a Father in Chriſt Jeſus, *Eph.* 2. 13, 14. *But now in Chriſt Jeſus ye who ſometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt, for he is our peace who hath made both one,* &c. Is not this a matter of rejoycing for you, that now you may go unto God as your God, you may look up to God, and ſee him reconciled to you, and ſee all the properties of his nature looking towards you in a friendly way, that you may ſee God over-ruling all providences & diſpenſations for your intereſt and advantage, you may go and comfort your ſelves in your God, you may encourage your ſelves in him, you may go and rejoice in the Lord as your God through the blood of the Croſs of Jeſus your Mediator.

3. *Hereby are our corrupt natures ſanctified, and made holy unto God*; Jeſus Chriſt becoming man, he has conſecrated unto the Lord that part of humane nature, that he came of, and did belong to, he hath taken off our nature, and he hath offered it up unto the Lord, and ſo conſecrated the whole lump that it was taken out of; this was typed out of old by the firſt fruits that did conſecrate the reſt, *Levit.* 2. 1. Or of the Meat-offering; here you ſee was a part taken and offered up unto the Lord, and the whole was hereby conſecrated. Now Jeſus Chriſt he comes of that part of the world that was the

Elect, and the choſen of God, he did not come in General of all mankind, though in a general way God hath ſaid, that all Nations are of one blood, yet Jeſus Chriſt did not come ſo promiſcuouſly, and in the general, but he came of that particular part of man that the Lord had choſen, and ſet apart for himſelf, and that is the Elect of the world, and as for Reprobates, he came not of them, he was not of that rank and number, as you may ſee, *John* 17. 16. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*, and *v.* 19. *For their ſakes ſanctify I my ſelf, that they alſo might be ſanctified through the truth.* For their ſakes, that is, for thoſe that were the Choſen of God, and given to Jeſus Chriſt by the Father, as *v.* 6. *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men, that thou gaveſt me out of the world*; for their ſakes I ſanctify my ſelf; he takes our nature and offers it to God, and conſecrates it as a part, or the firſt fruits of the whole, whereby the whole nature of the Elect of God are dedicated to the Lord, and ſanctified and made holy, or way is made for the ſanctifying of it; I may allude unto that Scripture, in *Rom.* 11. 16. *For if the firſt fruit be holy, the lump is alſo holy, and if the root be holy, ſo are the branches*; I know this is not the meaning of this Text, I only allude to it; as the Apoſtle ſaies in that caſe, ſo I ſay in this caſe, if the firſt fruits be holy, the lump is alſo holy, and if Jeſus the root be holy, then all the branches are holy, to be under a peculiar and ſpecial conſecration to the Lord; now here Chriſtian, is a ground of rejoycing for thee, thou art born a child of wrath, and thy nature

is

is a ſinful nature, and there is by nature nothing but ſin dwelling in thee; ay, but Jeſus Chriſt he hath taken thy nature, he hath worn it, and he hath conſecrated thy nature to God, and made way for the ſanctifying of it. So as now way is made through Jeſus Chriſts appearing in our fleſh for the conſecrating of thee unto God, and making of thee holy, ſo as thou mayeſt rejoice, notwithſtanding the remains of ſin that are in thee, notwithſtanding all the impurity and defilements that are to be found in thy heart; thou haſt a ſtained, polluted Soul, thou lookeſt into thy ſelf, and thou ſeeſt thy ſelf ſo ſpotted and defiled, that thou art aſhamed of thy ſelf; well, but look upon Jeſus Chriſt, and conſider how thy nature is ſanctified in him, he ſits upon the Throne all holy, and thy nature that he did aſſume is holy; why Chriſtian, there is holineſs in the root for thee, there is holineſs in Chriſt thy head for thee, and becauſe he is holy, thou alſo ſhalt be holy; becauſe he hath ſanctified thy nature, therefore thy nature ſhall be ſanctified, for your ſakes, ſaies he, I ſanctify my ſelf, that you alſo may be holy; I am holy, and you alſo ſhall be holy, Analogically, that is, in ſome proportion, in your degree and meaſure you ſhall be in a ſuitableneſs to my holineſs, that you may be made meet for me. Saies the Apoſtle in 1 *Theſ.* 5.23. *The very God of peace ſanctify you wholly*; ay, it ſhall be ſo, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt hath ſanctified himſelf, and your nature is ſanctified in him, and therefore you ſhall in due time be made holy, and therefore rejoice; though defiled and ſinful for a ſeaſon, yet you ſhall be

made holy, and without ſpot, and blameleſs. Chriſt hath made way for this.

Fourthly, *Hereby way is made for our ſtability, for an eternity and perpetuity for us in grace and in glory.* Jeſus Chriſt he is a Mediator for ever; he hath taken our Nature to wear it for ever; he will never lay aſide our Nature again, no not to eternity; well therefore, we who are conſecrated by him, and reconciled to God by the blood of his Croſs, have a perpetual ſtanding in his Grace, and ſhall have an everlaſting abiding in that ſtate of Glory unto which we ſhall be advanced by him, and through him; all Enemies cannot unthrone Chriſt; Ages cannot remove Chriſt off from his Throne in Heaven, but there he is, and there he ſhall ever Rule and Sit. Now becauſe he Sits there, thence is your ſtate in Grace ſure: Why, if he keep our Nature in conjunction with his own Divine Nature, then he abides alwaies full and powerful in reference unto the Concerns that he is to manage, and the work that he is to do for you, full of ſtrength, and powerful therein, able to make all effectual; he Sits there in Heaven to that end. This makes him ſo much concerned about the bringing in, and gathering home of thoſe that he did appear for in our fleſh, *Joh.* 10. 16. See how Chriſt doth concern himſelf for all thoſe for whom he was a Mediator. *There are others*, ſays he, *that are not of this fold.* I have ſome among the Jews and among the Gentiles; I have ſome of all Nations, theſe I muſt gather home: Chriſt will not loſe any: And thoſe that are brought home, he will maintain in his Grace, becauſe he is an ever-living, and an everlaſting Mediator, and a powerful Mediator: Why, under

under all your temptations (Chriſtians) in your way, that you meet withall to caſt away your confidence, and to renounce your hope in the Grace of God: Do you glory and triumph in Chriſt Jeſus that is our ſtanding Mediator in Heaven; comfort your ſelves in him; for as long as he abides in our Nature, he will concern himſelf for us; and as he hath his Eye alwaies upon the Glory of God, ſo upon the good of ſinners; and being a Mediator, he is carried on with unbiaſſed ends, and aims to act impartially and indifferently between both Parties; therefore whilſt Jeſus Chriſt is Mediator, your ſtate in Grace is certain: whilſt Jeſus Chriſt hath God's Glory to care for, your Salvation is ſure; for while he concerns himſelf for the Glory of God he muſt concern himſelf for the Salvation of his People. Theſe two Intereſts are made one by Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator. And then,

Fifthly, In the 5th and laſt place; *Hereby we have familiarity and communion with God.* Jeſus Chriſt having as Mediator made peace for us; now behold he lets Believers into a comfortable enjoyment of God. Now we may look towards Heaven, and ſee God the Father, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. He therefore that *hath ſeen the Son* (ſaith Chriſt) *hath ſeen the Father alſo, Joh.* 14. 9. What, Do you ſay, Shew us the Father? What, *Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me?* Do you not know that I have reconciled both together, and made way for communion, that you now, in and through me, may converſe with the Father as your God and Father. Jeſus as our Mediator hath given us boldneſs with God, and let us into the enjoyment of communion with God,

and hath given us bleſſed familiarity with God that now we ſhall enjoy him in a Goſpel way here, and and have certain hopes of enjoying of him in a glorious way in Heaven, ever to be in his preſence, and to behold his glory; all this comes in by Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator; and by the way, there is no ſtate and condition into which a Soul may be brought while he is under Grace on this ſide Heaven, but in that ſtate and condition he may hold fellowſhip and communion with God. The three Children did ſo in the fiery Furnace. *Daniel* did ſo in the Lion's Den. *Jonah* did ſo in the Whale's belly, when he went down into the great deep, yet there he enjoyed communion with God. So as whatſoever your diſcouragements be here in the fleſh, yet glory in this, that having peace with God through the blood of Jeſus, you may go to him and ſay, Father: You may ſay, My Lord, and my God. You may converſe with him in the way of the Goſpel that is conſecrated for us to hold and enjoy fellowſhip with him in; and now Chriſtians, what a ground of rejoycing is here! Friends they did. A boſom acquaintance in the fleſh is taken from thee; they die from thee, and their places know them no more; but here is Jeſus, he ever abides upon the Throne, clearing the way of communion between God and thee: So that God is alwaies thy friend, alwaies in reconciliation to thee; alwaies ready to make known himſelf, and to impart of his Love and Grace to thee. Here is an abiding ground of joy for us in Chriſt Jeſus, if we conſider him as he is a glorious Perſon in his Mediatory Conſtitution.

SERMON

SERMON II.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

THE words have been opened unto you, and we have given you this Propoſition from them;

Doct. *That there is enough in Chriſt alone for the Soul that is intereſted in him, to rejoyce in, whatſoever his caſe and condition is.*

You need no more than Jeſus to make you bleſſed upon Earth; and there is enough in Jeſus to make you bleſſed for ever in Heaven; there is enough in Jeſus to make you happy in time, and enough in Jeſus to make you happy to eternity.

Now here for the Direction of your Faith in looking up to, and in dealing with Chriſt in a dark or low condition, we propoſed to conſider,

Firſt, *What Jeſus Chriſt is:* And here we told you, that

1. In the firſt place, *He is glorious in his Perſon*: I now proceed.

2. As he is glorious in his Perſon, *ſo he is gracious in his Nature*, full of grace, full of kindneſs, full of compaſſion both unto Saints and unto Sinners: He might have appeared glorious in his Perſon, and not gracious in his Nature. He

might have appeared altogether terrible; a glorious Perſon, and yet ſurrounded with terrible Majeſty; but Jeſus Chriſt is as gracious in his Nature, as he is glorious in his Perſon; he is full of compaſſion unto the Sons of men; there is no harſhneſs, there is no bitterneſs in Chriſt Jeſus; there is nothing in him (my friends) that will diſcourage you; if you ſearch him never ſo narrowly, and if you look him through, there is nothing in him to diſcourage you, but he is full of love, and full of all encouragement: I do not mean that he is full of love only as he is God abſolutely conſidered. The Apoſtle ſays, That *God is Love*; he ſpeaks it of God the Father; and ſo as Chriſt Jeſus is God equal with the Father in the Divine Nature, it is applicable to the Second Perſon; but that is not all, but he is full of grace in his Nature, as he is clothed with our fleſh, and his Love it is alwaies an encouraging Love; it is alwaies a heart-calling Love; it is alwaies a Soul-ſatisfying Love. You cannot find ſuch an Object upon Earth, nor ſuch an Object in Heaven, as Jeſus Chriſt is; that is, ſo full of compaſſion, and ſo full of grace as he is; and the greatneſs of his Love as a ground of Joy unto the believing Soul in all conditions, is ſuch as

Firſt, *Does break through, and conquer all oppoſings.*

Secondly, *It heightens under all our ſorrows:* And

Thirdly, *It abides unmixed in all ſeaſons.*

Firſt, *His Love is ſuch, and ſo great, that it breaks through all oppoſings and forbiddings.* Though there is nothing in Chriſt to diſcourage our Love to him, yet I muſt tell you, that there is enough in us to diſcourage Chriſt's Love to us; and indeed there is nothing elſe in us, but that which may forbid the

Love

Love of Jeſus Chriſt dealing with us: Now, what-ſoever are the matters of diſcouragement in us, the Love of Jeſus breaks through them all; it ſticks at nothing. Let the heart be never ſo vile, let the ſinner in himſelf be never ſo loathſom; let his waies be never ſo contrary; let the principles upon which he acts be never ſo averſe, the Love of Jeſus Chriſt breaks through all. What is the ſtate of a ſinner when Chriſt Jeſus comes to viſit him? a vile, loathſom, filthy, abominable ſtate. You have it ſet out in the 16th of *Ezekiel*, by all manner of ſtrange expreſſions, that ſhews the ſinner is in a very loathſom ſtate; in the 5th and 6th verſes; *Thou layeſt in thy blood*, ſaith he, and *none Eye pitied thee*. One caſts his Eye upon thee, and ſays, There is a loathſom Object, I will have nothing to do with him; another comes by, and caſts his Eye, There is a loathſom Creature, Who would come near ſuch a one? *Thou wert caſt out*, ſays he, *to the loathing of thy perſon*; but ſays Jeſus, *I paſſed by thee, and it was a time of love*. And in the 10th of *Luke* you may ſee it ſet out in a Parable of the *Samaritan*; one paſſed by a poor Creature that lay in his blood, and would have nothing to do with him; and another paſſes by, and would have nothing to do with him; but Jeſus the good *Samaritan* he paſſes by, and he pities him, and binds up his wounds, and heals him. You may ſee what forbiddings this Love of Chriſt marches through, *Titus* 3 3. *For we our ſelves were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceivers, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice, hateful, and hating one another*. Good Lord! one would think, is it poſſible that ſuch a Soul as this ſhould be brought home, and loved by Jeſus

Chriſt

Christ, that is in such a state, and have such a heart, and walks in such waies? But, says the Apostle, *v. 4. After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us*, &c. And 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. *Such were some of you, but ye are washed*, &c. Jesus, he loves you notwithstanding this, and continues to love you. Nay (my Friends) this is not all, but his love is such as doth not only march through great oppositions and forbiddings before grace, but high discouragements after grace; Why, what is the walk of the Soul after grace? Is it not very crooked, and very perverse? Doth not he fall short of the Rule? Doth not he offend God in every thing he doth? Is there not a great deal of unbelief? Is there not a great deal of pride, a great deal of carnality, and impatience, and passion, in your hearts after grace? Do not you stumble and fall in the Christian walk every day? violate the Covenant of your grace-state? break the Commandments of God? and yet notwithstanding all, he continues to love you; in the 89th *Psalm v.* 30, 31. Supposing, says God there, that my Children, my Redeemed Ones, that I have set my love upon, and visited with my grace, that they *will forsake my Law*, and walk out of the way of my Commandments, that I have called them to walk in, and charged them to abide in: Now the Love of Jesus Christ keeps up through all; therefore says the Apostle, *Neither life, nor death*, &c. *shall separate us from the love of Christ*, *Rom.* 8. 38. The life of a Believer after grace is full of provocation; and it may be, he continues to provoke God as long as he lives: There are provocations

vocations and unkindneſſes in his way to the Lord all his life long, till he come to the end of his daies; and yet ſays the Apoſtle, Life ſhall not ſeparate. Now this is a great ground of rejoycing, that thou mayeſt look unto thy Jeſus, and ſee him alwaies loving of thee: Thy waies are very uneven and unconſtant, and thou canſt not keep in ſo good a frame as thou wouldeſt do, yet ſtill Jeſus loves thee: thou art full of wandrings, ſtill Jeſus loves thee; why, here's a love that marches through all oppoſings.

Secondly, *It is a Love that heightens under all our ſorrows*; I mean as to the communications and diſpenſes of it, or the actual and ſaving diſcoveries of it unto the Believer; it heightens under all our ſorrows, that the greater our troubles are, the more he loves; and the more pitiful our ſtate is, the more compaſſionate he is; he ſees a Believer it may be, lying under great diſtreſſes of body, or in great Agonies of ſpirit; why, this draws out his love, he loves thee more, he is the more pitiful, and the more compaſſionate to thee, as he ſees that thy ſtate is a ſorrowful ſtate, and thy condition a troubled condition; and indeed the Believer never hath ſuch diſcoveries and evidences of the love and kindneſs of God to him, as when he is in a low condition. Jeſus Chriſt, he did come, you know, into a wilderneſs, to walk with *Iſrael*; and let their troubles be never ſo many, Jeſus Chriſt would not leave them; but the greater their troubles were, the more was his love diſcovered, and the more did his faithfulneſs to them appear; and they never had ſuch an eminent and ſignal appearances of God with them, as when they were in their Wilderneſs Travels. *Jacob* a holy man, never

had ſo much of God, nor never had ſuch a ſight of God, as when he was in a low condition, *Gen.* 28. 15. *Behold I am with thee, and I will keep thee in all places whither thou goeſt, and will bring thee again to this Land, and will not leave thee till I have done what I have ſpoken to thee of.* And *Gen.* 31. 42. Here the good man was in a great ſtrait; he was afraid that he ſhould be cut off; Ay but ſays he, *The Lord, the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *he it was that rebuked thee yeſternight.* He did charge thee that thou ſhouldeſt ſpeak no hurt, no evil unto me. And when *Iſrael, Exod.* 3. came into a groaning captivity and bondage; when their bondage grew very great and unſufferable, then did the Lord wonderfully diſcover himſelf, *v.* 7. *And the Lord ſaid, I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people which are in* Egypt, *and have heard their cry, by reaſon of their Task-maſters, and am come down to deliver them,* &c. And *Pſa.* 34. 16. *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his Ears are open to their cry.* Here is a ſuppoſition of a condition that the Soul is in, or may be brought into, that makes it groan and cry; Well, for your comfort know, that then in a ſpecial manner is the Eye of the Lord upon you, and his Ear open to you. And *Pſal.* 56. 18. *Thou telleſt my wanderings,* &c. Thou telleſt *my flights*; ſo ſome read it. I have never an enemy to purſue me, but the Lord takes notice of it, and ſeeth whither the enemy hunts me and drives me; he takes notice of the fury of the oppreſſor that comes out againſt me: *Thou telleſt my wanderings, and putteſt my tears in thy bottle.* Every tear in a ſorrowful condition Jeſus Chriſt bottles up; he keeps it in remembrance;

God's

God's Peoples higheſt viſits of favour and grace; their choiceſt experiences, and the moſt comfortable manifeſtations that they have of God, have been when they have been in a low condition. In proſperity, there God many times lets the Soul walk more at liberty; ay, and he hath leſs of God in proſperity then in adverſity; there he is left to walk by his own light (as I may ſo ſay) and he bears up himſelf more upon his own comforts, he ſtands then (as it were) more upon his own legs, but in a weak condition, and in an afflicted ſtate, in a time of trouble, then is the Lord preſent, diſcovering himſelf more fully to him; and hence it is that the Saints have had their higheſt Joys in the priſon, and have been made to ſing in the flames. They have commended the ſharpeſt diſtreſs that ever they were brought into in this world to be ſuch as could never ſeparate Chriſt and their Souls: the love of your Jeſus is ſo great, that it will leap into a furnace to keep you company. It is ſuch as it will come into any ſtrait and hazard to ſupport and bear up your ſpirits; Lo, this is your friend & your comforter, that you have, O believer, to rejoyce in: Jeſus his heart is alwaies towards you, and the love of his heart it heightens under all your ſorrows; let darkneſs grow upon your ſtate, the light of his love will ſhine through it, and give you a light that you ſhall ſee your way: let your diſconſolations be never ſo many in the creature, the love of Jeſus Chriſt will countervail all, for if the creature be taken away, Jeſus Chriſt will be the more, and in the want of all things he will diſcover himſelf ſo, as ſhall anſwer all to your Souls.

3. *As his love is such as heightens under all our sorrows, so it abides unmixed in all seasons;* as it is a love that cannot be diverted, so it is a love that cannot be adulterated, but it is alwaies a sweet, alwaies a pure love; a heart easing, a soul pacifying, a soul rejoycing love, none can throw any bitterness into the love of Jesus, but it is alwaies a pure, clear, Chrystal love, that hath no mixture in it; it is not thus with the love of friends; the sweetest, the best, the firmest friends that ever man had upon earth, there is some mixture in their love: They will sometimes rejoyce your hearts, and sometimes they will make your hearts sad: loving friends may sometimes frown, and be churlish and unkind, and you may go to them with your hopes and expectations, and be disappointed; you may soon weary out their love, and they may discover such a mixture, that their hearts seem sometimes to be alienated. But it is not thus with the Lord Jesus, but his love is alwaies a pure, clear, soul satisfying love, there is light in him, and no darkness at all, there is sweetness in him, and there is no bitterness at all. There are (as I said before) things that may encourage you, but there is nothing that will discourage you in Jesus, no not unto eternity: now believer this is thy friend, is not this a brother born for adversity, look amongst all thy friends upon earth, hast thou such a one? look into Heaven, are any of the Angels able to do for thee as Jesus can? Who is there in Heaven or Earth that thy Soul can desire in comparison with Jesus? he is glorious

rious in his perſon, and he is gracious in his nature.

3. *Jeſus is the exhibiter, revealer, and unfolder of all the fulneſs of the bleſſed and glorious Attributes of God in a ſalvation way*; God is thy God in and through Jeſus Chriſt, and not otherwiſe, God abſolutely in himſelf dwells in light unacceſſable, and is a conſuming fire, we cannot make an approach to God as he is abſolutely conſidered, and live; but now in and through Jeſus Chriſt, God he is a God that may be ſpoken withal, and all his attributes, and the propertiesof his nature are ſavingly enjoyable. There is a great deal of the glory of God that was diſcovered in the works of Creation, there was the glory of his wiſdom, and the glory of his power, of his goodneſs, and of his ſoveraignty, theſe were diſcovered in the works of Creation, but as ſo exhibited they are not ſaving, neither do they afford ſoul-ſaving relief to us, abſolutely conſidered in that primary exhibition that was made of them in the works of Creation; but now, in and through Jeſus Chriſt, there all the attributes of God they are ſaving, all the attributes of God they are comfortable and refreſhing. *Adam* when he was out of Chriſt, could not think of God, but it was a terrour to him: therefore as ſoon as ever he had ſinned, fear entered into his Spirit, and he hid himſelf; why? ſaies the Lord to *Adam*, what is the matter? O! ſaies he, *I was afraid, and I hid my ſelf*? Why ſo? O to conſider the greatneſs of God, and the wiſdom of God that was diſcovered in the Creatio-

ation, and the power of God that was discovered in the Creation, and the soveraignty and dominion of God that was discovered in the Creation: and to think that he had no interest in this God, that he had provoked and grieved him, this was a terrour to him, and saies *Adam*, Lord I was afraid, and I hid my self, ay, and all the attributes of God are enough to strike terrour into the Soul that hath no interest in Jesus, considered out of Jesus, and they are not relieving. But now in and through Jesus, all Gods attributes they are reconciled to, and engaged for the believer, and he may see that which may comfort him, and that which may satisfy him, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God*, as if he had said, all the power of God that is saving, it is in and through Christ Jesus, and all the wisdom of God that is saving, is in and through Christ Jesus, therefore in him it is said are hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col.* 2. 3. Now do but consider the attributes of God apart, and you will find, that they are no way relieving out of Christ, but in Christ they are full of Grace, and they are all exhibited and revealed through him as saving.

1. *As to the Justice of God.* Why, the justice of God out of Christ, it is terrible, to consider that God is a most exact, severe righteous God, that will give every one their due, and will mete out a portion to every one according to his desert. This is most terrible, to consider God out of Christ, & what may we expect, but as *Ps.* 11. 6.

Upon

Upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; this ſhall be the portion of their cup: This will be the portion of all thoſe that God hath to do withal out of Chriſt. But now in Chriſt Jeſus this attribute is attoned, and all that wrath, and that juſtice, and that vengeance had to execute, is poured out upon Chriſt Jeſus; juſtice dealt with the Lord Jeſus in its utmoſt ſeverity, and received ſatisfaction in him and from him; ſo as now ſaies the Apoſtle in 1 *John* 1. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins*, &c. and ſo *Rom.* 3. 26. *To declare I ſay at this time his righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus*: Why, juſtice hath nothing to ſay againſt thee, but it ſpeaks all for thee, becauſe God is a righteous God, therefore he will love thee: and therefore he will bleſs thee with all bleſſings, becauſe he hath received full ſatisfaction from Jeſus Chriſt thy ſurety.

2. *Conſider ſecondly, the power of God out of Chriſt, and it is enough to fill thy heart with terrour*, Ezek. 26. 14. *Can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee ſaith the Lord*, &c. Haſt thou a ſtrength to grapple with me, or canſt thou ſet thy foot againſt me? no verily, what are all the nations of the earth? they are leſs then a crawling worm before the foot of the great God, thou canſt not ſtand before it. But now in Chriſt Jeſus this Attribute is attoned too, and the mighty power of God is engaged to carry on, and to mannage a ſalvation deſign in thee. Therefore ſaies the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 1. 19. *That ye may know what is*

the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power: So as let the power of God be never ſo great, it is a power engaged for thee to manage and carry on ſalvation work in thee: whatever be the oppoſings that it meet with, either from thy own heart or from others.

Thirdly, *If you conſider the Attribute of God's Wiſdom*; *It is not relieving out of Chriſt*. That God is ſo infinitely wiſe, and ſo deep, the Soul may think all this is againſt me, and what is he now doing, but contriving new torments, and new Hells, that are more fierce and exquiſite for me? and ſurely there will be no end of theſe toriments. But now in Chriſt Jeſus the Wiſdom of God is imployed in ſuch a deſign of Salvation, that the Angels are ſaid to pry into it; they are aſtoniſhed at the deſign that is brought to light by the Wiſdom of God.

Fourthly, *If you conſider the Patience of God out of Chriſt*; *it is no way relieving*. For, what will it advantage a Soul that God does bear with it a while, when under all, there is wrath treaſuring up for him againſt the day of wrath. *Rom.* 9. 22. *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the Veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction*; So as the Patience of God is exerciſed in bearing with a ſinner a little while till he greaten his ſins: But God will come in upon him notwithſtanding all, though he bear a little while. But now in Chriſt Jeſus the Patience of God is reconciled, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. *For the Lord is not ſlack concerning his Promiſes, as ſome men count ſlackneſs, but is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not wil-*

willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance. Why, in Chriſt Jeſus God he is patient, and God he glorifies his Patience, that he might be known to be gracious.

Fifthly, *The Love and Goodneſs of God out of Chriſt is not relieving; for 'tis at an end.* The Soul may think, well, his love is at an end, he hath no more love for me; I am his enemy. Man, when he had ſinned, muſt turn out of Paradiſe; he muſt pack away and be gone. *See my face no more,* ſays God. But now in Chriſt Jeſus is the Love of God revealed, and the Goodneſs and Mercy of God revealed.

Sixthly, *The Immenſity and Benignity of God, out of Chriſt, is not relieving.* What though God may give thee a conſiderable portion in the world, he may fill thine hands with wealth, and thy houſe with treaſure, and fill thy cheſt with ſtore. But all this is given in anger and diſpleaſure; there is nothing of love in it; and thy fulneſs is but fitting thee for the ſlaughter. There is the Curſe of God upon all thy ſtore and plenty; this will not at all avail thee. But now in Chriſt Jeſus the Immenſity and Benignity of God is reconciled, and how doth it ſpeak out love and grace! God is an Immenſe God, and he gives out according to his own Immenſity. And what then are the gifts of his Love and Grace! they are ſuch as cannot be weighed; they are ſuch as cannot be meaſured; there is a height, and depth, and length, and breadth, in all his goodneſs that cannot be fathomed. And all this he is to the Soul through Chriſt. And

Seventhly, *If you conſider his Eternity out of Chriſt; it is no way relieving.* That God is my enemy,

ſays the Soul, and is an everlaſting God; he will be my enemy for ever; and all that is in God will be engaged againſt me for ever; his Juſtice, his Wiſdom, and his Power, and all his Attributes will be engaged againſt me for ever: But now in Chriſt Jeſus, the Eternity of God is matter of great comfort to thee, becauſe he is an Eternal God, being thy God, he will be thy God for ever, thy dwelling place for ever, and thy portion for ever: he will never depart from thee: he will never leave thee: he will never ceaſe to be what he hath promiſed to be, becauſe he is an everlaſting God; and thus you may run over all the Attributes of God, the glory and the fulneſs of them is exhibited and unfolded, publiſhed and revealed by Chriſt Jeſus unto us; and hence it is that in Scripture ordinarily there is no great mention made of the mercy and kindneſs of God to ſinners, but through and with reſpect to Chriſt Jeſus, *Eph.* 1. 3. *Who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.* And hence is it ſaid, *that we with open face behold the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. and 2 Cor. 4. 6. *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs hath ſhined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*; and hence is it that Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to be the brightneſs of the Fathers glory, and the expreſs image of his Perſon, *Heb.* 1. 3. So as here is another thing that is an abiding ground of joy and rejoycing for us in Chriſt Jeſus, he is the exhibiter, revealer, and unfolder of the fulneſs of all the bleſſed and glorious properties of Gods nature in a ſalvation way: hence when God comes to enter into

into Covenant with a believer, he doth not enter into Covenant with him abſolutely, but in and through Chriſt Jeſus; and hence is it that all the promiſes of the Covenant that are Gods gifts of grace to us, they are yea, and Amen, in Chriſt Jeſus: now do but conſider this, & you may ſee that Chriſt is one your Souls may take comfort in; conſider the glory of his Perſon as he is Mediator, and conſider the graciouſneſs of his nature as he is full of love, and conſider how he is the exhibiter and unfolder of the fulneſs of all the bleſſed and glorious Attributes of God in a ſaving way: And whatſoever diſcouragement Chriſtian thou haſt here below, look up to Jeſus, and thou mayeſt ſee encouragement; have you men that are engaged againſt you? look up to Jeſus, and you may ſee God in him engaged to be your God, Gods power engaged for you, Gods mercy, Gods name, and Gods glory, all engaged for you. Thus as to the firſt particular, what Jeſus Chriſt is.

2. We ſhall now proceed to ſpeak ſomething to the ſecond, and that is what this Jeſus hath; you have ſeen what he is, we will now conſider what he hath; and there are but two things that I ſhall glance upon under this head, that may be relieving to us in our looking up to Jeſus.

1. *He hath an irreſiſtible power.*

2. *He hath an unexhauſtible treaſure.*

1. *Jeſus in whom we ſhould rejoyce at all times, hath an irreſiſtible power.* A power over all fleſh, over all Creatures, over good Angels, and over bad Angels; a power over men, a power over every creature in the whole Creation of God, *Col.* 2. 1. *Ye are compleat in him, which is the head*

of all principalities and powers, and *Mat.* 28. 18. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth*; Jesus Christ hath an absolute dominion over all Creatures as he is God, and this is a dominion that he received, not by gift from the Father, but he hath it from the right of Creation, as he is with the Father God over all blessed for evermore. But there is a delegated power as I may so say, a power that is committed to Christ Jesus by special grant from the Father as he is Mediator over the whole Creation of God, *Eph.* 1. 21, 22. *Far above all principalities and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church.* Now *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11. there you may see that he received this power from God, *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name*, &c. and 1 *Cor.* 15. 27. *For he hath put all things under his feet*, and *Psal.* 8. 6. *Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thine hands.* Christ hath an universal power as Mediator over the whole Creation of God: Now that which is for thy comfort in it, is, in that this power is imployed and improved;

1. *For the overcoming of all thine enemies.* And
2. *For the over-ruling and filling up of all thy wants.*

1. *This great and universal power that Christ hath received over all creatures is improved and imployed in the overcoming and binding of all enemies that are against thee*; Let thine enemies be ne-

never ſo ſtrong, let the powers of men engage againſt a poor Soul; Jeſus Chriſt hath a power greater then them all, and will bind them at his pleaſure, and will take the prey out of the hands of the terrible; let Satan the Prince of darkneſs put in againſt a poor creature, he ſhall never be able to take him, and carry him Captive; for Jeſus Chriſt will ſecure him, becauſe *greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world*, 1 John 4. 4. He is greater than the Prince, the God of the world; now the great power that Jeſus Chriſt hath, is a power for you; JeſusChriſt he is inveſted with this power as he isMediator. that he might over-rule all the enemies of your ſtate, & vanquiſh them at his pleaſure, ſo as let them for a while tyrannize and vaunt it; yet they ſhall never be able to carry one poor believer to Hell, nor out of the dominion & power of GodsGrace; for all this power that Jeſus hath, he is intruſted withal for your ſecurity, And

2. *For the over-ruling of all your wants in your ſtate.* Jeſus Chriſt hath a power, and all power, that he might ſupply you in all your occaſions & neceſſities; it may be the poor believer is diſcouraged, he ſees but a little meal in the barrel, but a little Oil in the cruiſe, he ſees his ſtock begins to waſt, he thinks he ſpends upon the principal, and it will ſoon be all done, and how ſhall he live then; the water in the pitcher is almoſt out, and the cake that is baked is almoſt eaten, and the Soul begins to think now it muſt die; ay, but Chriſtian, this Jeſus hath an all-power to anſwer all thy wants; let thy neceſſities be never ſo many, do but conſider who it is

that thou haſt to deal with, it is he that hath the fulneſs of the earth in his own poſſeſſion, *Pſal.* 50. 12. *If I were hungry, I would not tell it thee for the world is mine, and the fulneſs thereof, and* Pſal. 89. 11. *The Heavens are thine, the Earth alſo is thine, and as for the world and the fulneſs thereof thou haſt founded it?* whoſe is the world I pray? In whoſe hand is it? is it not in the hand of your Jeſus? Hath not he a dominion over all creatures for you? his mediatory power is for you, to be improved for you, and to be imployed for you, ſo as let your neceſſities be what they will, they cannot be greater then your Jeſus hath a ſupply by him for, and is able to anſwer. You know the thouſands of *Iſrael*, were called to live 40 years in a howling wilderneſs, where there was no plowing nor ſowing, and yet behold they were alwaies ſupplied. They did but cry unto the Lord, when they ſeemed to be in want, and the Lord gave them bread from Heaven, and fleſh from Heaven, and he gave them water out of the Rocks, and the fulneſs of the earth is ſtill in his hand, *Elijah* was in a low condition, and did not know what to do, and God commands a Raven to feed him, and God commanded an Angel to be his Servant. All the Creatures they are in covenant for your good; I have made ſaith the Lord a Covenant for you with the Beaſts of the field, and with the Fowls of heaven, and with all Creatures. And if God does but command the quails to come, and feed the people of *Iſrael*, they ſhall do it; And if God do but command the Ravens to feed the Prophet, he ſhall not want; ſaies Chriſt,

Chriſt, *Mat.* 16. 9. do ye not yet underſtand, neither remember the 5 loaves of the 5 thouſand, and how many Baskets ye took up? They were in a little ſtrait, and reaſoned among themſelves: Why, ſaies Chriſt, have you forgotten how I fed ſo many thouſand with 5 loaves, and 2 fiſhes? and my arm is not ſhortned, my power is not leſſened. It is an abſolute power, an uncontroulable dominion that I have; therefore fear not Soul, do not weep over your empty bottle, do not weep over your loſt eſtate, do not weep over your paſt comforts, but look up to the fulneſs of Jeſus; he hath enough for your relief, he can command of the fulneſs of the earth into your condition, and give it you by what hand he pleaſeth. And as he hath an uncontroulable power that can rebuke all your enemies, and make a ſupply to you in all your wants; So,

2. *He hath an unexhauſtible treaſure*; It hath pleaſed the Father to put his all-fulneſs of Grace into him, and make him Lord of all that Grace that is to be diſpenſed to believers in that known place, *Col.* 1. 19. *It hath pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* All Grace it comes from Chriſt, it is placed in him as the Fountain, and he hath the fulneſs of all Grace for your relief;

1. *Unto vital influences*: And,

2. *Unto actual aſſiſtance.*

1. *He hath a fulneſs of all Grace unto vital influences*; Therefore the ſecond *Adam* was made a quickning Spirit, as the Apoſtle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. he hath received life that he might give

give it unto others; the Son of God is ſaid to raiſe thoſe that were dead, he is a living ſpring of Grace that ſends vital Grace into our hearts. It is he that doth implant vital principles of Faith, of love, of patience, and of new obedience, and makes us new creatures to God, and cauſeth us to live before him; and this may be matter of encouragement to thoſe that are yet dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, thoſe that are yet void of Grace, and deſtitute of ſpiritual life; why Sirs, Jeſus Chriſt is a living Spring; Jeſus Chriſt is a quickning Spirit, and he gives life to thoſe that are dead, he is furniſhed with life by the Father to give life to dead Souls; let the dead ſinner then hope in Jeſus, and let him wait upon Jeſus, he that hath commanded thoſe that have been dead to live, can alſo command thy dead Soul to live, he hath ſtill life-power in him, and life-grace in him. And,

2. *He hath all grace for actual aſſiſtance*; he is the true Olive, that empties of his golden Oil into the hearts of believers; hence Chriſt ſaies, *John* 15. 5. *Without me you can do nothing*. I am the Vine, and ye are the branches, or I am the Root, and ye are the Branches. Why, Jeſus Chriſt he is an influential root; he is a root full of ſap: and full of nouriſhment, and full of moiſture, that he does convey to believers for their ſpiritual growth and improvement; by his ſtrength it is that we are able to ſtand in a day of temptation, by his ſtrength it is that we are able to manage ſpiritual duties. O alaſs, a little duty would be too great for us, were it not for the ſtrength of Chriſt Jeſus, and a little

of

of the grace of Chriſt Jeſus, will make a Soul wonderfully ſtrong, that he ſhall be able to do even to amazement, to bear and to ſuffer to aſtoniſhment. A little of the Grace of Chriſt, O how patient will it make the Soul under great afflictions, and how will it ſtrengthen a poor weak believer to hold on in the face of all difficulties! he ſhall be able to hold pace not only with the Footmen, but with the Horſemen, by the grace of Chriſt are we ſweetly, ſwiftly, and joyfully carried on in the ways of new obedience, hence is it that we are oft-times commended unto the grace of the Lord Jeſus in divers Epiſtles; I commend you ſaies the Apoſtle to the grace of the Lord Jeſus, and the grace of the Lord Jeſus be with you; and indeed there needs no more, becauſe there is enough for our ſupply at all times, and therefore when we are poor and weak, and empty, and low in our ſelves, we ſhould look up to Jeſus, Jeſus is alwaies full, we know not how to go through ſuch a duty, nor how to manage ſuch a condition, we have not grace for it, and we think we ſhall ſink and fail under diſcouragements; why Chriſtian, if indeed thou hadſt no more then what thou haſt in thy ſelf, thou mighteſt fear this, but keep thine Eye upon Jeſus, he is full, and filled for the ſupply of thee, and he will communicate according to thy neceſſities, we may therefore at all times, and upon all occaſions wait upon him.

SERMON

SERMON III.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation.

WE are ſhewing you from this Scripture what a conſtant ground of joy and rejoycing there is in Jeſus Chriſt for the believing Soul, at all times, and in all conditions; as to what Chriſt is, and as to what Chriſt hath, we ſpake the laſt day, and ſhall now proceed unto the third particular propoſed to be conſidered.

3. *And that is, what Jeſus Chriſt will do, and is a doing for the believing Soul that may be a ground of comfort and joy to him in all his heart ſaddening conditions and tribulations in this world.*

And firſt, Jeſus Chriſt appears as an Advocate in Heaven at the right hand of God for all believers, anſwering and ſilencing all accuſations and charges brought in againſt them, whereby they are continued in that juſtified peace ſtate, that in their firſt coming over to God they were ſtated in. There are many failings and provocations in a Chriſtians way and walking with God. The remains of ſin that yet abide in them, they will be riſing up and putting forth into the life and life-acts of a Chriſtian. But Jeſus Chriſt as his Advocate in Heaven ever ſtands up before God to ſee the peace

peace of a Chriſtians ſtate kept: Satan that old accuſer of the Brethren, he is daily obſerving a Chriſtians walking and viewing a Chriſtians ſteps, to ſee if he can gather up any thing in his life to improve it, and carry it unto God againſt him, and believe it friends, he won't better your caſe as he repreſents it unto God, he won't leſſen your fault, but he will greaten it, and make it worſe than it is; he is called 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *The adverſary* of believers. The word that we tranſlate adverſary, ſome read it a Court adverſary, one that puts in ſomething againſt you in the Court of Heaven, but I would rather read the word thus, one that will charge beyond truth, one that will go beyond the bounds of truth in the charges and accuſations that he brings in, for the word in the Original does import ſo much one that acts againſt all rules of juſtice in the plea's that he ſhall put in, or the charges that he ſhall deliver againſt a Chriſtians ſtate in the Court of Heaven, *Rev.* 12. 10. he is there called *the Accuſer of the Brethren*, which accuſed them before God day and night, he is the old Accuſer and Traducer of the Saints at the Bar of Gods juſtice. Now Jeſus Chriſt he alwaies ſtands up at the right hand of God, there to appear as an Advocate on the believers account, ſuing out on the account of his blood, new pardons for their renewed tranſgreſſions, or the continuance of juſtification and of pardons upon their ſtate, ſo as nothing may be heard in the Court of Heaven againſt them; Jeſus Chriſt ſtands up to ſee that a Chriſtians peace with God be not violated

ted, and therefore he removes ſin as faſt as it appears, and he anſwers the accuſation as ſoon as it is made, and he ſilenceth the adverſary as ſoon as he comes, *Rom.* 8. 34. *Who* (ſaies the Apoſtle) *ſhall condemn? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us*: If ſin appears, he will remove it, and if Satan ſtep in, he will ſilence him, he is there upon this account, as an Advocate, or as an Attorney to anſwer for you, whenever your name is called in Queſtion, and therefore ſaies the Apoſtle, 1 *John* 2. 1. *My little Children, theſe things write I unto you, that you ſin not, and if any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*; as ſoon as ever an offence is committed, Chriſt ſteps up, and he pleads your caſe, and he urges the value of his blood that was ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins, that your peace with God, into which you were brought in your firſt coming over to him, may be maintained; Now Chriſtians do but conſider this, and you will find that it is a ground of joy and comfort in your preſent ſtate. It may be your outward peace is broken in upon; you have enemies that have diſturbed you as to your outward comforts, and as to your outward joy and ſettlement, you have thoſe that have incenſed it, may be your intimate friends againſt you, that now they ſtand aloof from you, well though it be ſo, yet your peace with God, that abides, and Jeſus Chriſt as your Advocate continues you in your juſtified ſtate before God, let the Devil do his utmoſt, he ſhall never incenſe

cenſe God againſt a believer, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt is an Advocate alwaies at his right hand, ſpeaking for him, let him tell never ſuch ſtories of a Chriſtians carriage and converſation unto the Lord, yet he ſhall never incenſe God againſt him. You know that he did his utmoſt to incenſe God againſt *Job*, he told the Lord fair ſtories of him, that there was no truth, no ſincerity in him, and that he ſerved him but for the comforts of his ſtate, and for the outward advantages that he did enjoy, but Jeſus Chriſt he ſaw the peace of *Job* kept, he was his Advocate then ſo early, and he mainrained *Job* in the love and favour of God, and thus will he do for all believers, he will ſilence all accuſations, and remove all objections, and he will continue you in your peace ſtate with God; the vertue of Chriſts death is a continued vertue, it is alwaies influential upon the heart of God for a Chriſtian, the blood of Jeſus is ſaid to be a pleading blood, *Heb.* 12.24. *And to Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaketh better things then the blood of Abel*; It is a pleading blood, and it ſaies, Father, Remember the merits of the Sacrifice of my death, remember the ſatisfaction that thou haſt received, and do thou continue to love, and continue to bleſs, and continue to delight in, and to acknowledge theſe poor ones, though they fail, and though they provoke thee. The believer it may be is ſo aſhamed of himſelf upon an overcome, that he hath not one word to ſay for himſelf, he can give no reaſon why a decree of juſtice ſhould not come out againſt him, but the

blood

blood of Jeſus, that is alwaies ſpeaking, and alwaies interceeding, whereby we are kept in that juſtified peace-ſtate with God, that in our firſt coming over to God we are ſtated in; and this may ſatisfie the Chriſtian under all the diſquiets, troubles, turmoils and unſettlements that he meets withal in this world.

Secondly, *Jeſus Chriſt is a powerful Interceſſor in Heaven, daily urging the merits of his Death, and improving the Intereſt that he hath with God for the compleating of the work begun in the hearts of Believers, whereby they are growing up to perfection.* Jeſus Chriſt is not only an Advocate with the Father, ſilencing and anſwering all accuſations and charges, and ſo maintaining of the Believer in his juſtified Peace-ſtate with God, but as a lively and living Interceſſor, he is alwaies urging the merits of his Death, and improving the Intereſt that he hath with God, for the compleating of the good work of his Grace that is begun. Jeſus Chriſt hath not only a Fountain of all Grace for your conſtant ſupply, but he acts the part of an Interceſſor, and improves the merits of his Death for the managing of the work of Grace that is begun in your Souls. This you have, *Heb.* 9. 24. Jeſus Chriſt *is gone into Heaven to appear in the preſence of God for us*: And he is not there to appear only as an Advocate or an Attorney, but he is there as a mighty Interceſſor pleading with God in the ſtrength of the merits of his own Death, improving all his Intereſt with the Father for you, *Rev.* 5. 6. *In the midſt of the Elders ſtood a Lamb as it had been ſlain, having ſeven Horns*, &c. This *Lamb* is Chriſt. Now Chriſt Jeſus he is in Heaven, advanced upon a Throne

for

for you: He is *in the midſt of the Throne* near unto his Father; and how doth he ſit? or how doth he appear? Why, ſays he, he appears *as a Lamb as it had been ſlain*; that is, Chriſt he bears the marks of his Death before his Father upon the Throne; he is there to make a freſh commemoration of his ſufferings, preſenting his bloody death, and his bloody Sacrifice before his Father. As Jeſus Chriſt after he was riſen, ſaid unto *Thomas, Come*, ſays he, *behold my wounds, and ſee the print of the Nails in my hands, and in my feet.* So Jeſus Chriſt ſaies as it were to his Father; Father, behold theſe wounds! behold how I was pierced! behold how I was wounded for theſe people! and, as one ſays, ſo many wounds, ſo many cries. Every wound hath a crying mouth that is daily pleading with God for the Believer. Jeſus alwaies ſtands as a Lamb as it were ſlain, urging his death, urging his agony, urging the greatneſs of his ſufferings, when juſtice had him under the laſh, when he trode the Wine-preſs of his Fathers wrath alone, and he is urging the value of his death for the ſucceeding of the work of grace begun, for the encreaſing of ſtrength, for the carrying on of your Souls unto perfection, Jeſus Chriſt lives upon the Throne, carrying on this work, and for this great end, he conſiders the Chriſtians ſtate in all his dangers, and in all his weakneſs, and under all his wants, and he is improving his death for more grace, and for an increaſe of ſpiritual bleſſings, he knows your dangers by reaſon of your temptations in the world, and he is praying for you there, and improving his intereſt with his Father on that account, *John* 17. 15. *I pray not*

that thou ſhouldeſt take them out of the world, but that thou ſhouldeſt keep them from the evil; O Father ſaies he, they cannot ſtand againſt the temptations of the world, in their trades and concerns in the world, not alone, let thy grace be ſufficient, and let thy ſtrength be ſufficient to ſecure them in their dangers, he ſees that your grace is yet but ſmall, and will hardly ſtand againſt a ſmall encounter, and therefore he prays that it may be encreaſed, as *Luke* 22.31, 32. *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*: as if he had ſaid I know that thy grace will be ſorely tryed, and will meet with great oppoſition, but *I have prayed that it may not fail*, he pleads with the Father for a more plentiful effuſion of the Spirit upon the hearts of his people, *John* 14. 16, 17. *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth*, &c. And when Jeſus Chriſt does pray for the Spirit, he prays that he may come in the royalties of his office into your hearts, bringing in the fruits of grace, of peace, and of joy, and of ſpiritual comfort. And thus he in Heaven looks after the work that is begun, and upon that account he is called not only *the Author but the Finiſher of our Faith*, *Heb.* 12. 2. The interceſſory work of Chriſt is not only at your firſt coming over to God, to give you favour with God, & peace with God but it is a continued act over your whole ſtate, till you come in glory, *Heb.* 7. 25. *He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt*, or to carry on ſalvation work, till he hath compleated it; Why? *becauſe he ever liveth to make*

make interceſſion for us; Jeſus Chriſt by his interceſſion does deliver out of one ſtreight to day, and he will continue in the ſame work, and if a new ſtreight does appear to morrow, he will aid through that alſo, and he will go on ſo, until he hath ſetled thy Soul in a compleat ſalvation ſtate. Jeſus Chriſt does daily exhibit, and urge, and preſent the merits of his death, for the carrying on, and managing of the work that he h th begun. And here take notice by the way, that when we ſay Jeſus Chriſt continueth to interceed; you muſt know, that he doth not interceed in a way of free Grace, as we do at the throne of Grace, he doth not interceed in a precarious way, as believers do, but he interceeds in the merit of his own ſufferings, his interceeding is an authoritative act, he doth not only pray the Father for Grace, and for acceptance for us, but he urges the Father upon the account of the infinite price of his own ſufferings that he gave him in, and ſo does in an authoritative way challenge and demand the bleſſings of his purchaſe, or of his death for the believer, he demands of his Father the Grace that he pleads for, and he in his interceeding act, does will it into the Souls of his People, *I will Father, ſaies he, that thoſe that thou haſt given me, be with me, where I am*; and God the Father does alwaies hear his Son, he never denies his Son any Petition that he offers to him, *John* 11.42. And I knew, ſaies he, that thou heareſt me alwaies, and *Pſal.* 2. 8. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance*; ſaies the Father, ask and you ſhall have; ſo as

Chriſts interceſſion is a prevailing interceſſion, it is a powerful interceſſion, it is alwaies a ſpeeding interceſſion; now Chriſtians, do but conſider what a ground of joy and comfort this is for you in your preſent low condition. It may be thou haſt met with many loſſes in thy outward eſtate, it may be thou haſt met with many breakings there, & emptyings there, that thy outward comforts they are many of them gone, & thou ſeeſt others very uncertain; ay, but here is Jeſus Chriſt, he is interceeding with the Father for more Grace, for more ſpiritual bleſſings, ſo as though thou art poor in temporals, thou art growing rich in ſpirituals; though thou haſt but a little of the Creature, yet thou haſt Grace that is thriving in thy heart, that Chriſt will ſee ſhall be alwaies encreaſing & growing; be not diſcouraged therefore though thou haſt but a little Grace, & but a little ſtrength; who knows how much Grace the prayer of Chriſt may bring into thy heart, Chriſtian; who knows how much ſtrength the prayer of Chriſt may bring in upon thy weak condition to cloath thee with, be not therefore diſcouraged, though thou ſee thy Bottle empty, and thy outward ſtore growing low, ſeeing Jeſus Chriſt is carrying on the work of Grace in thy Soul, and enriching of thee with the high and ſacred bleſſings of Heaven; verily Sirs, if any of you had a Friend at Court, that did alwaies ſit at the right hand of the King, and that had his ear, and a grant of all his Petitions that he made to him, and if you knew that he would be alwaies moving the King on your behalf, and pleading with him for ſome new

ew favours, and new advantages, and places of ruſt and dignity, and the like, how would your hearts riſe in the remembrance thereof, and you would promiſe your ſelves great things in a little while. Why, JeſusChriſt he is your friend in the Court of Heaven, that hath alwaies the Ear of God; and verily it is not a vain notion; he is alwaies interceeding with the Father on your behalf, pleading for ſome new bleſſings, for ſome further diſcoveries of his love, and manifeſtations of his favour for thy further proficiency in grace, that thou mayeſt be carried on unto perfection. Jeſus Chriſt is alwaies pleading this with his Father; ſo as though you be very low as to your outward condition, yet you may rejoyce that your ſpiritual comforts they are alwaies thriving; they are growing comforts; and your ſtrength in grace is alwaies an encreaſing ſtrength; Chriſt prays for it, and makes it ſo by his daily Interceſſion.

Thirdly, *Jeſus Chriſt perfumes all your Spiritual Offerings; and preſents them unto God as grateful and acceptable, through whom they alwaies remain as a ſweet memorial in his preſence, notwithſtanding the weakneſs and imperfection of them as they come from us.*

My Brethren, the liquor of our ſpiritual ſervices hath a tang of the Veſſel through which they paſs; there is an ill ſavour in all our duties as they come from us; there is a great deal of ſin, a great deal of ſelf, a great deal of corruption that doth mingle with them, and doth defile them, and give them an ill ſavour. But now Jeſus Chriſt he alwaies ſtands between God and us, and receives our Offerings, and refines them, and purifies them, and cleanſeth them, and perfumeth

them, and ſo makes them a ſweet odour, and then offers them up unto God; and hence comes our Prayers to be prevalent; hence come they to be heard, and to have returns of Grace made unto them. It was Jeſus Chriſt that made *Noah*'s Sacrifice ſo ſweet and odoriferous, *Gen.* 8. 20, 21. And *Noah builded an Altar unto the Lord, and he took of every clean Beaſt, and of every clean Fowl, and offered burnt Offerings on the Altar; and the Lord ſmelled a ſweet ſavour*, &c. Chriſt Jeſus was in his Sacrifice, and that made it pleaſant, and ſweet, and fragrant before the Lord. This was typed out of Old by the High Prieſts bearing the iniquities of the holy things of God's People away, *Exod.* 28. 36, 37, 38. *He ſhall bear their iniquities*, that is, he ſhall bear them away; he ſhall receive the iniquities of their holy things, and ſhall bear them away, whereby all ſhall be hallowed; and this ſhall be, ſays he, *upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord*; or that they may be for an acceptableneſs before the Lord: Why, Jeſus Chriſt is the Goſpel of this type; he told his Church of old, that there muſt be a Prieſt and an Interceſſor for the ſins of their holy things; now Jeſus Chriſt is this Prieſt that takes the iniquity of our holy things away; and ſo he preſents our ſpiritual offerings unto God refined and purified, that no droſs, that no matter of ſin may be found in them when they are preſented before God, *Cant.* 3. 6. Here the Church of God is ſpoken of, as coming out of a dry barren *wilderneſs* condition; now ſhe comes *like pillars of ſmoke*, ſhe comes praying, ſhe comes pleading with God; now her prayers are *like pillars of ſmoke*, that is, ſay ſome, to ſet forth the darkneſs, to ſet forth the corruption

ruption or weakneſs of them: Our prayers, as they come from us, are more ſmoke than fire; they are more ſin than grace; there is a great deal of corruption upon them that does defile them, and that does beſmear them, they go up like pillars of ſmoke, but *they are perfumed with Myrrhe and Frankincenſe, and with all Powders of the Merchant*; that is, Jeſus Chriſt he ſweetens them, he ſcents them, and makes them offerings of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour, as any thing is perfumed by ſweet Spices, or odoriferous Powders that are mixed with them: Or, *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderneſs like pillars of ſmoke*; that is, ſay ſome others, like the ſmoke of Incenſe; the Prayers of God's People they do aſcend like the ſmoke of Incenſe; Jeſus Chriſt he perfumes them with his Incenſe, and ſo they go up through Jeſus Chriſt as the ſmoke of Incenſe of old went up to Heaven; and this perfumes them, as that which is perfumed by Frankincenſe and by Myrrhe, and by ſweet Powders, and the like: It comes all to one reckoning in which ſenſe ſoever we take it. It ſets forth thus much to us, that howſoever ſpotted, and howſoever defiled, and howſoever tainted our duties are as they come from us, Jeſus Chriſt makes them ſweet and ſavoury, and pleaſant unto his Father, and preſents them as a ſweet memorial unto him, *Iſa.* 56.7. *Even them will I bring to my holy Mountain, and I will make them joyful in my houſe of prayer; their burnt Offerings and Sacrifices ſhall be accepted upon mine Altar*, &c. Why, the Believer comes and brings his poor Petitions, but they are not fit for the great God to read over, to conſider, nor to look upon; but Jeſus Chriſt he examines them, and he mends

the Petitions, and draws them up fit to be preſented to his Father, and delivers them with his own hand, and then they come to be accepted. *You are*, ſays God unto his Church of old, *a Kingdom of Prieſts unto me, and an holy Nation*, *Exod.* 19. 6. Now this is applied unto the Church in New-Teſtament daies, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. And in *v.* 9. *Ye are a choſen Generation, a Royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People:* Ye are made *a holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices.* Ay, but will they be accepted? yes, through Jeſus Chriſt, acceptable to God by Chriſt Jeſus. And *Rev.* 1. 6. *He hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God the Father*; that is, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices; but this will not do alone; Jeſus Chriſt he ſtands to receive every Offering, and it paſſes through his refining and cleanſing hand, and his perfuming Incenſe, and ſo it comes unto God, and then 'tis a valuable Sacrifice; then 'tis a pleaſant and delightful Sacrifice; he puts it into his golden Cenſure, and offers it up to his Father, as *Rev.* 8. 3. Here is the great Myſtery of the Interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt held forth to you, in reference to your ſpiritual Oblations; he had a *golden Cenſer, and there was given him much Incenſe*; he hath enough for all your prayers; there was given him *much Incenſe*, that he ſhould offer it *with the prayers of all Saints*; ſo we read it; but it might alſo be read, *That he ſhould add it unto the prayers of all Saints*; ſo as our prayers are not weighty as they come from us, nor acceptable, but they have the Incenſe of Chriſt Jeſus *added to them*, and then they are weighty, and then they are acceptable, and from hence God the Father comes to be delighted in the ſupplications of his ſervants.

ſervants. Now by the way Chriſtians, I beſeech you, take in this notion into your faith; it is generally received and believed, that we muſt reſt upon the ſatisfaction of Chriſt Jeſus for the acceptance of our perſons; let me tell you, that you muſt alſo act Faith upon Jeſus Chriſt as an Interceſſor, and reſt upon the Merit of his Incenſe, and of his Mediation for all your ſpeedings in your approaches unto God. As you muſt act Faith upon the Merits of Chriſt Jeſus for the acceptance of your perſons; ſo you muſt act Faith upon the Merits of Chriſt's Death, and of Chriſt's Life now in Heaven for the acceptance of all your ſpiritual performances with God. And here, my Brethren, you have another ground of Joy and Comfort in your low eſtate here: Suppoſe that you be toſſed to and fro by many tempeſts; ſuppoſe that you were ſorely broken in upon by breaches of providence; ſuppoſe that you have loſt many dear friends that you did uſe to conſult withal, and to go to for aſſiſtance, why, yet you have Jeſus Chriſt keeping your way clear unto the Father, and he it is that gives you a conſtant boldneſs with him; Bring all your Petitions; ask what you will in the Name of Chriſt Jeſus, and it ſhall be granted to you: Chriſt ſtands ready to receive your Petitions, and to mend whatſoever is amiſs in them, and to preſent them in his own dreſs unto his Father, that they may be accepted; and in and through Chriſt you have a liberty and boldneſs with God; *Let us come boldly*, ſaies the Apoſtle, *unto the Throne of Grace, Heb.* 4. *ult.* And in *Heb.* 10.19. *Having therefore Brethren boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of Jeſus.* Jeſus Chriſt will not throw out a Petition becauſe it was no better

ter worded: Jeſus Chriſt will not throw back a Prayer, becauſe the Spirit was no more compoſed and ordered in it: Jeſus Chriſt will not throw back a duty, becauſe he ſees a little unbelief in it, or ſomething of ſelf in it, or ſomething that is diſpleaſing to his Father in it, but he takes out whatſoever is diſpleaſing, and he adds his own incenſe to it, and carries it unto his Father, and delivers it an acceptable offering unto him. And on this ground you may joy and rejoyce in the Lord Jeſus, whatſoever your condition in this world is.

4. *Jeſus Chriſt doth in wiſdom direct, and with love and grace influence all the loſſes, croſſes, and afflictions of your Chriſtian ſtate*, whereby they are all made to further your ſpiritual intereſt, and be ſubſervient unto your great ſoul advantage.

It is the lot and portion of Gods People to be often afflicted, to be ſore broken, as in the place of Dragons, and they are many times emptied from Veſſel to Veſſel, but there is infinite wiſdom, (Chriſtian) infinite reconciled wiſdom, that doth order all the motions of providence in all the changes of thy condition; Jeſus Chriſt he hath hold of every providence, and he directs it in wiſdom, and influences it with love and grace, that ſo it muſt do thee good, it cannot be unto thy harm or prejudice, in *Eph.* 1. 22. *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things unto the Church.* Chriſts providential Kingdom is ſubordinate unto his ſpiritual Kingdom, unto which thou doeſt belong, and by his grace and wiſdom he directs

all

all, and in mercy doth manage all for thy advantage, *Pſal.* 34. 15. *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry*: The Lord Jeſus is ever viewing of a Chriſtians ſtate, in his goings out, and in his comings in, in his lyings down, and in his riſings up: he is ever viewing a Chriſtians condition, and wiſdom doth direct all for the beſt, it is ſaid therefore, *Ezekiel* 1. 18. and it is an obſervable Scripture, *as for their rings they were ſo high, that they were dreadful, and their rings were full of Eyes, round about them four.* The Prophet is here ſpeaking of the great myſtery of providence, ſometimes ſaies he, Gods providences are very deep; they are very tremendous and dreadful; but be it ſo: the *rings* of the wheels of providence they are alwaies full of Eyes, ſaies he, round about them four, they are *full of Eyes*, [*Eyes*] note, wiſdom, directing, guiding, influencing, and managing. Now ſaies he, the rings of the wheels that move in every ſtate & conditiona re alwaies full of Eyes, there is not only an Eye one way, but there is anEye that looks every way. The wheels of providence they are full of Eyes; there are many Eyes, Jeſus Chriſt does obſerve, and he looks narrowly, and in his infinite wiſdom he doth direct for the beſt; there are Eyes in the wheels. Things do not caſually come upon you, things do not come upon you by chance, but there is the wheel, that is full of Eyes, that doth move (Chriſtian) in all your troubles, and in all your loſſes, and in all your croſſes, and by the Eye of God that is upon your condition, that ſet the wheel a going, doth he obſerve and take

take notice what is beſt for you, when it is ſeaſonable to make a breach, and then a breach ſhall be made, when 'tis ſeaſonable to take away a comfort, then a comfort ſhall be taken away, when 'tis ſeaſonable to let a temptation looſe, then a temptation ſhall come, when 'tis ſeaſonable to put you upon a tryal, then the tryal ſhall appear: *The rings are full of Eyes.* There is wiſdom that doth direct the providences of a Chriſtians ſtate, therefore you have it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. I pray mark this Scripture: *if need be ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations*; the Eyes of the wheels obſerve when 'tis needful to come in with a change of providence, when 'tis needful to let looſe Satan upon you, when 'tis needful to bring a croſs into your condition, when 'tis needful to bring an affliction upon you, to lay a wound upon your bodies, or a weight upon your Spirits, if need be, ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations, ſo as the temptation don't come till you have need of it: God ſees when 'tis time to bind, & when 'tis time to looſen, when 'tis time to enlarge, and when 'tis time to ſtraiten, when 'tis time to give, and when 'tis time to take, and if need be 'tis thus and thus with you; and as the Lord ſees for the over-ruling in matters of affliction, ſo alſo for the comings in of comfort, therefore ſaies the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 4. 16. *Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find Grace to help in the time of need*; when God ſeeth that you need more ſtrength, and more grace, you ſhall have it, when God ſees that you need more comfort, and more peace, you ſhall

have

have it, ſo as wiſdom does direct all, and love and grace does influence all the croſſes, and all the loſſes of a Chriſtians ſtate, ſo as they ſhall work for his good and advantage; ſo *Heb.* 12. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth:* Now ſee the deſign of God in all afflictions, the deſign that love and grace is managing and carrying on, through the influence that it hath upon afflictive diſpenſations, *v.* 10. 11. *For they verily, for a few daies chaſtened us after their own pleaſure, but he for our profit that we might be partakers of his holineſs,* &c. He fans you that he might fan away your chaff, he puts you into the furnace to refine you from your droſs, and make you more pure Gold, he is carrying on a deſign of grace and holineſs by all the emptying providences that he brings upon your ſtate, and by all the changes that he makes in your condition, *Iſaiah* 27. 8. 9. *In meaſure when it ſhooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: By this ſhall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away ſin. And* Ezekiel 20. 37. *And I will cauſe you to paſs under the rod, and I will bring you into the bonds of the Covenant,* they were Gods Covenant People already, therefore he means, I will bring you more into the Covenant, I will bring you to walk cloſer up to the Covenant of my Grace; the Apoſtle under this conſideration tells us, 1 *Pet.* 1.7. *That the tryal of your faith being much more precious then that of Gold that periſheth, though it be tryed with fire, might be found unto praiſe and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt.* This is from the bleſſed deſign that Chriſt Jeſus is managing by all your afflicti-

ons,

ons, in wiſdom directing of them, and in love and grace influencing of them; hence the Apoſtle *James* ſaies, *James* 1. 2. *My Brethren*, ſaies he, *count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations*, why, how is it poſſible for a Chriſt ſo to do? Let him but conſider that infinite wiſdom reconciled, does direct the temptation, and love and grace do influence the temptation, then behold he may count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations, and 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory*: See how all the loſſes, croſſes, troubles and temptations of a Chriſtians ſtate, are made ſubſervient unto his main and ſpiritual intereſt, they help to perfect holineſs that is begun, to bring your hearts cloſer to God, to cauſe you to walk more watchfully, to live more believingly, & more dependingly, to carry it more humbly before the Lord: Now Chriſtians here is a further ground of rejoycing for you, whatever are the emptyings of thy ſtate, whatever are the loſſes and the croſſes of thy preſent condition; why ſay, that wiſdom directs, and love, and grace influenceth all for the beſt. If I be broken, it is for the beſt that I ſhould be broken, if I be thus and thus afflicted; why, it is beſt for me to be thus afflicted. I am thus and thus reproached, I will be contented, and I will be ſatisfied in the will of God, it is beſt for me to be thus reproached. I am thus and thus tempted, I am thus and thus unſetled, thus and thus hurried; well, God ſees it beſt for me to be thus, this is the beſt

beſt condition, and this is the beſt providence, this is the beſt diſpenſation for me; God ſees that it is ſo, for wiſdom that doth direct, and love and grace that doth alwaies influence.

5. *Whatever are the failures of your outward condition, Jeſus Chriſt doth alwaies keep the wells of Salvation open for you, which are alwaies full, whither you may come and have your fill.*

Creature Springs they often times run low, but promiſe ſtreams they are alwaies high, Creature Ciſterns, they are often empty and dry, but the promiſes that are the wells of ſalvation, they are alwaies full. The leaves and the bloſſoms of your outward condition, they are often blaſted by the wind, and withered by the froſt, and they drop off, but the promiſes they alwaies keep their greenneſs, they alwaies keep their beauty, they alwaies retain their fulneſs: Chriſtians there is a fulneſs in the promiſes, that you can never draw out, if you ſhould ſpend all your daies upon a promiſe, you can never empty it; the Saints that have gone before, have been ſpending one age after another upon the promiſes, and ſtill they are full; and they are full with a running over meaſure, now whatſoever is thy condition in this world, if thou beeſt a believer, there is ſome promiſe of Grace that doth ſute thy condition, whatſoever is thy temptation, or thy tryal there is ſome promiſe that doth offer relief, whatever is thy neceſſity, there is ſome promiſe that ſtands ready with mercy and grace. Now Jeſus Chriſt he ſtands at the head of every promiſe, and keeps the way clear, and the paſſage free for every believer, and there-

fore

fore Christ is called the yea, and the Amen of every promise, that is, they have their certainty, and their stability in him, and from him, confirmed by him, and are communicated from him, Jesus Christ is the Lord of every promise, and he will see (Christian) that thou shalt not be wronged of thy right, he will not suffer any to come and take away thy blessedness that lies there, now whatsoever thou wantest in thy outward condition, the promises are alwaies full, whither thou mayest go for relief; we read that the *Philistines* did fill up the wells that *Abrahams* Servants had digged, *Gen.*26. 18. these wells of water, they were stopped, enemies could fill them up; but my friends, all the Devils in Hell cannot fill up one well of Salvation, they cannot rob a Christian of one Gospel promise, neither can they obstruct his way to the promise, but Jesus that sits above, and is at the head of the promise, he alwaies keeps the way clear and open; now my friends here is another ground of rejoycing for you in Christ Jesus, you look into your estates, and you see that you are on the losing hand daily, you look upon your outward condition, and you see that you are going down the wind there, you look upon your outward comforts, and you see them fading, and dying, and uncertain, and perishing before your Eyes; ay, but your choyceſt blessings that lye in the promises, these are in no uncertainty, and though you have not a friend upon earth to go unto, and though you have not a fulness upon earth to go to, yet you have a fulness in the promise (Christian) that you may go to; there

is

is a fulneſs of mercy, and a fulneſs of grace in the promiſe, whither you may go. Thoſe that have taken away your outward comforts, they cannot take away your comfort in the promiſe, neither can they ſtop up your Wells of Salvation; ſays *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 50. *This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy Word hath quickened me.* The word of Promiſe that came to my Soul with life, and that was as life from the dead unto me, when I was in a low, and in an afflicted ſtate; when I was ſorely tryed, and broken in upon; why, conſider Chriſtians then, that you have a ground of rejoycing in Chriſt Jeſus, that he is the *Yea* and the *Amen* of every Promiſe, that can never fail; and he ſecures the Grace of every Promiſe for you, and the Comfort, and the Light, and the Strength of every Promiſe for you. You may therefore, though you are brought low in your outward condition, look up unto Chriſt Jeſus and rejoyce.

Sixthly, *Jeſus Chriſt he is alwaies a Light unto the Believer in all his darkneſs, and a Guide unto him in the intricacies of his way unto his Fathers houſe.* We know not which way to go, nor how to direct our own ſteps; Jeſus Chriſt he is promiſed as a Light, as a Light unto the world, and that is not all, but he is a Light unto his own People in a ſpecial manner, and a Guide unto them in all their waies, *Luke* 1. 79. *To give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace:* Why, the Believer he wants counſel, and he wants direction, and he wants advice from the Lord, how to ſteer his courſe; Jeſus Chriſt he ſtands by him, and he adminiſters it; he opens the way; he reveals the Myſteries of the

Kingdom; he inſtructs the ignorant, and teaches thoſe that are fools the great and deep things of God, and therefore the promiſe is, that *the wayfaring man, though a fool, ſhall not erre in the way of peace, Iſa.* 35. 8. He will guide them, and direct them, and inſtruct them by his counſel at all times. And becauſe Believers go in a wildered way, that is very hard to find, and dangerous, and hazardous, Jeſus Chriſt therefore is ſuch a Guide, that takes the charge of them, as a Commander and Leader: So the Promiſe runs, *Iſa.* 55. 4. *Behold I have given him for a Witneſs to the People, a Leader and Commander to the people*; ſo as he takes the charge of the Believer in his wildered way; he guides him, and he directs him in his courſe, and he will ſee that he ſhall be ſafe aided to his Fathers houſe. Now Chriſtian, here is a further ground of rejoycing for thee: You meet with many troubles, and diſcomfortures, and diſcouragements, and diſappointments in your outward condition; but Jeſus Chriſt he will ſee that you ſhall not be diſappointed of Heaven, but he is an abiding Light to you, and a conſtant Guide to you; and he will ſo lead you, that you ſhall not ſtumble nor fall, nor periſh in your way unto the Kingdom.

Seventhly, *Jeſus Chriſt maintains the Union of the Believer with himſelf, from whence ariſe unchangeable relations of Grace, both with the Believer and him, and with the Believer and the Father, which are alwaies pleadable and improveable.* My Brethren, Jeſus Chriſt takes Believers into a near and intimate union with himſelf, and makes them branches of him who is as the ſtock; he makes them as bone of his bone, and as fleſh of his fleſh:

He

He takes them into an union that he will never ſuffer to be broken. It is an indiſſolvible union; it is an inſuperable; it is an inſeparable union; therefore ſays Chriſt Jeſus, *Joh.* 17. *Thoſe that thou haſt given me have I kept, and not one of them have I loſt.* Jeſus Chriſt never loſt a member; Jeſus Chriſt never loſt a limb; Jeſus Chriſt never loſt a true ſubject; Jeſus Chriſt never loſt a ſheep out of his fold; ſo as this near intimate union it is an indiſſolvible union; now from this union do ariſe everlaſting, unchangeable relations of Grace, that are alwaies pleadable and improveable, from this near and intimate union with the Lord Jeſus, doth Chriſt ever abide your head, filled with ſtrength to animate you, and to influence you; filled with wiſdom and knowledge to inſtruct you, and inform you; filled with underſtanding to guide you in your way. In this intimate union you are members of his body; he will never ſuffer you to be caſt off; ſo as you may alwaies (Believer) ſtand in him, and plead the advantages of a ſtanding in him, and of an implantation and ingraftment into him. Jeſus Chriſt in this union is alwaies your Husband, and you are alwaies his Spouſe; and the advantages of this relation are alwaies enjoyable, and they are alwaies pleadable; *I have betrothed thee unto me in righteouſneſs and in judgment for ever, ſaith the Lord*; ſo as I will never caſt thee off; I will never give thee a Bill of Divorce; I will be thy Huſband for ever, and thou ſhalt be my Spouſe for ever: The relation is alwaies pleadable. And in your near and intimate union with himſelf as you, ſtand in relations of grace to him, ſo you ſtand in relations of grace to the Father: You are the

Adopted Children of God; God the Father of Chriſt is your Father, and he is alwaies your Father, and you are alwaies his Children; nothing can come between; nothing can cauſe him to caſt you out, and diſinherit you: having received you into this firm, into this intimate union, you are Heirs; being made one with Chriſt, you are Joynt-Heirs with Jeſus Chriſt, Heirs of God; once an Heir, and for ever an Heir; ſo as all the bleſſed things of the purchaſe of Chriſt Jeſus, and the whole Inheritance of Chriſt Jeſus is before you; 'tis yours, and for you. And now Chriſtian, what a ground of rejoycing is here for you? What though your outward comforts are coming and going? they are fading and vaniſhing: It may be you have your hands full of them to day, and to morrow they will be gone, and you ſhall ſee them no more for ever; yet know, that you have an abiding ground of Joy in Chriſt Jeſus; for he it is that maintains your union with himſelf; he hath not only united you, but he keeps you in union, and he maintains all the gracious relations of the union, both with him, and alſo with his Father; ſo as though you have not a Friend upon Earth, you may go and ſay, well, I have a Friend in Heaven; I have not a Father upon Earth, ay, but I have a Father in Heaven; I have not a Husband upon Earth, ay, but I have a Husband in Heaven; I have not a faithful Brother upon Earth, ay, but I have a ſincere-hearted Brother in Heaven; the relations of Grace they hold, and they are alwaies pleadable and improveable. And then

Eightly, In the eighth and laſt place, *Jeſus Chriſt is making glorious proviſions in Heaven, and will in due*

due time glorify all his people with himself for ever, saies Christ Jesus, *It is expedient for you that I go away,* 'tis for your good, it was for your good that I came, and it is for your good that I staid so long, and it is for your good that now I go away: *For I go to prepare a place for you*: In my Fathers House are many mansions, and I go to make these mansions ready for you, I go to Heaven as your fore-runner. Consider Jesus as your fore-runner, that is entered in for you beforehand, making Heaven ready, preparing the Crown and the Kingdom for you; now though you be robbed of your earthly comforts, you cannot be robbed of your Heavenly glory; you may be spoiled of your Treasures here upon Earth, but you cannot be cheated of your Treasures in Heaven? Why, Jesus Christ is there to secure it, and he hath it in possession, he is there as your fore-runner, he is there to make all ready, *I will Father,* saies he, *that those that thou hast given me, be with me where I am, and the glory that thou hast given to me, be bestowed upon them, that they may be one, as thou Father and I are one.* Now under all your vicissitudes, and changes, and emptyings, and spoylings in this world, look up to Christ Jesus, and see Heaven sure in him, and see glory sure in him, and see a Crown, and a Kingdom sure in his hand, take comfort then Christians in all your necessities here below in the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the Prophet do you alwaies glory, and rejoyce in him.

Use. All that I shall super-add, shall be only in a sentence or two unto Sinners (for as to Saints

how they ſhould come to improve Chriſt Jeſus, and to live by faith upon him in all conditions, I ſhall ſhew you afterward, if God gives the opportunity;) but here in a word let Sinners conſider how miſerable their ſtate and condition is? Why Sirs; you have heard that there is an abiding ground of joy in Chriſt Jeſus for the believer, whatſoever his ſtate is; But do you conſider that none of this belongs to you, all this comfort belongs to Saints, not to you; you have no part in it, there is an abiding ground of terrour, of ſorrow, and of bitterneſs that belongs to you, becauſe you are apart from Chriſt that hath ſuch a fulneſs of all joy in him for believers. Take heed therefore how you content your ſelves in a Chriſtleſs ſtate, and how you bleſs your ſelves whileſt you are remote from Jeſus Chriſt, and without a part and intereſt in him; thou art not under the bleſſing, but under the curſe; there is the flaming Sword that hangs over thy head, and there is the hand writing that is over thee upon the wall. Let then the Sinner tremble on the conſideration of his periſhing condition in which he is, out of Chriſt, And let it be an inviting word to all of you who have not yet made your cloſe with Jeſus, that you enquire after him, that you earneſtly purſue after him; for your reſt and your peace, your comfort, and your bleſſedneſs, it is all in him, and can only be obtained by a cloſure with him.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation.

THe Propoſition that we are upon from the words is this.

Doct. That there is enough in Chriſt Jeſus alone for the Souls full rejoycing and triumph, whatſoever his condition be in this world.

Before I come to that which I further propoſed to conſider and ſpeak to, *viz.* how the believer ſhould be helped to live a life of faith upon Chriſt Jeſus unto his ſpiritual joy and comfort in all conditions; I ſhall alittle inſiſt upon, and labour to clear to you the Souls intereſt in this Jeſus that hath ſuch abiding grounds of joy at all times in him; ſaies the Prophet here in the text, *Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* I ſhall inſiſt upon the Pronoun [*my*] and labour to clear the believers ſtanding, that he may know his intereſt, and that he is indeed united unto Chriſt Jeſus; it is not in Chriſt at large that a Perſon can glory in, but it is in Chriſt under, or in a peculiar Goſ-

pel relation unto his Soul; it is not in Chriſt in general, but in Chriſt, that his Soul is intereſted in, that he can rejoice in in all conditions; and this I ſuppoſe is an inquiry that all of you will be deſirous ſhould be ſpoken to, *viz.*

Qu. How the believer may know that he hath an intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus? That this glorious and bleſſed Jeſus, this full Jeſus is his Jeſus, his Saviour? That he may be able to ſay with the Prophet here; *Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation?*

Anſ. In ſpeaking unto this inquiry, we ſhall obſerve this method.

1. *To premiſe ſeveral particulars to you by way of introduction, unto the reſolving of the inquiry.*

2. *We ſhall ſhew you the grounds, and the occaſion of the darkneſs that is upon the Spirits of believers, generally in and about their intereſt in Chriſt.*

3. *We ſhall ſhew you what the believer ſhould do in the interim, until he can have the evidence of his intereſt clear. And then,*

4. *Give you ſome diſcoveries how you may come to know whether you be indeed, and in truth intereſted, and ſtated in Chriſt Jeſus.*

1. As to the premiſes.

1. In the firſt place you may conſider, *that Chriſt is enjoyable, and only enjoyable, upon an intereſt in, and Goſpel relation unto him.*

There are many that comfort themſelves in a general notion of Chriſt, that he is a Saviour, and pleaſe themſelves well with the thoughts of it, but they will not find this relieving another day. It is only upon intereſt and relation, that

that Chriſt is ſavingly enjoyed. It is propriety and intereſt that gives the Soul real ground of glory and rejoycing in Chriſt in the worſt of conditions. And all the ſaving benefits of Chriſt they are diſpenſable, and only diſpenſable upon a Goſpel intereſt. A Soul can lay no claim to any thing that Chriſt hath; I ſay he can lay no saving claim unto any of the ſacred bleſſings that Chriſt hath to diſpenſe out, but upon a Goſpel intereſt in him, neither can the thoughts of Chriſt be really comforting unto the Soul without reſpect unto this relation that we are ſpeaking of, *Jer.* 31.33. *But this ſhall be the Covenant that I will make with the Houſe of* Iſrael *after thoſe daies, ſaith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their* God, *and they ſhall be my people,* and ſo *Zach,* 13.9. *I will ſay it is my People, and they ſhall ſay the Lord is my God,* here you ſee is a mutual intereſt and relation, the Lord doth make over himſelf unto his people. And the Lords people they are owned in a near and intimate relation with and unto the Lord; now this becomes the ground of the diſpenſing of all the ſaving benefits of Chriſt, and this becomes the ſolid, and the foundational ground of all the believers hopes and expectations from Chriſt. I ſay this intereſt and relation, it is the ground and viſible foundation upon which the Grace of Chriſt is diſpenſed, and the ſaving bleſſings of Chriſt are communicated. Do but ſee what intereſt and relation carries with it, *Ezek.* 16.8. *And I entered into a Covenant with thee, ſaith the Lord, and thou becameſt mine,* and then, ſaies he,

he, *waſhed I thee with water, yea, I thorowly waſhed away thy blood from thee, and anointed thee with Oil*, &c. And in Ezek. 34. 11, 12. 13, 14, 15. *For thus ſaith the Lord God, behold I, even I, will both ſearch my Sheep, and ſeek them out, as a Shepherd ſeeketh out his flock in the day, that he is amongſt the Sheep that are ſcattered, ſo will I ſeek out my Sheep*, &c. You ſee here the Lord does manifeſt a ſignal care, and it is grounded upon intereſt, upon relation. They are *my Sheep* ſaith the Lord, and therefore *I will ſeek them up*, & therefore *will I gather them*. They are my Sheep, & therfore will I preſerve them from Wolves. They are my Sheep, & therefore I will feed them, and lead them into green paſtures, & by the ſtill waters, and *John* 17. 9, 10. *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine*, &c. I pray for them ſaies Chriſt, and I will ſee after them, whileſt they are in the world, that they ſhall not be devoured and deſtroyed there, and what is the ground of the prayer of Chriſt, and of the care of Chriſt? Why; they *are mine* ſaies he: they were thine, Father, ſaies he, and thou haſt given them me, and now they are mine, and they are thine ſtill, ſaies he, and therefore Father, look after them alſo; and then intereſt and relation, it is the ſolid ground of our great expectations from the Lord in all our goings to him, and dealings with him; *I am thine*, ſaies the Pſalmiſt, *O ſave me*, and Iſa. 63. 8, 9. *For he ſaid, ſurely they are my people, Children that will not lie, ſo he became their Saviour; in all their afflictions, he was afflicted, and the Angel of his preſence ſaved them,*

in

in his love & in his pity he redeemed them, &c. And *v.* 18. *We are thine; thou never beareſt rule over them, they were not called by thy name.* And Joel 2. 17, 18. *Let the Prieſts ſay, ſpare thy people O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the Heathen ſhould rule over them; wherefore ſhould they ſay to the People, where is their God?* It is intereſt you ſee that they ground their expectations from God upon; it is upon a Goſpel intereſt and relation, that the Grace of Chriſts fulneſs, and the ſacred bleſſings and priviledges of all his offices, are given out and diſpenſed unto Souls; and without this intereſt and relation, the thoughts of Chriſt would not at all be comforting nor relieving, but the Soul might think on Chriſt Jeſus, and be troubled, as you have it, *Pſal.* 77. 3. *I remembred God, and was troubled, I complained, and my Spirit was overwhelmed.* And ſo a perſon remembring Chriſt Jeſus, and knowing no intereſt in him, muſt needs be troubled to think that there is ſuch a Saviour, and he hath no intereſt in him; to think that there is ſuch a glorious fulneſs in him, and he hath no right to approach to that fulneſs, and to expect from the all-ſufficiency of Chriſt Jeſus, the thoughts of this muſt needs trouble a poor Creature. Thus all the bleſſings of Chriſt Jeſus, and all communicable grace is diſpenſed upon an intereſt and relation, ſo as it is of great weight and importance for every one of you to conſider, whether you have an intereſt in Chriſt or no, for if you have no intereſt in him, you can have no ſolid ground of expectation from him.

2. *A believer that hath an intereſt in Chriſt,*

ma

may yet be without the ſenſe of that Intereſt.

Intereſt, and evidence of Intereſt do not alwaies go together; but a Soul that is in Chriſt may be full of fears and doubts, and queſtionings of ſpirit in and about its Intereſt. Intereſt is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, but the ſenſe of Intereſt is not ſo. Senſe of Intereſt is indeed neceſſary to our conſolation in Chriſt Jeſus, but ſenſe of Intereſt is not abſolutely neceſſary to our ſafe ſtate in Chriſt Jeſus; but a Soul that ſtands ſure in Chriſt, may be in the dark in and about his ſtanding. A Soul that is under the everlaſting and unchangeable Love of Chriſt, may yet be in the dark in and about that Love that is glorified, and ſhall further be glorified upon him, and in him. I have thought ſometimes, that many a poor Believer is juſt as *Hagar* was when her Bottle was empty, and ſhe ſate down weeping, that now ſhe muſt die. Why, ſhe need not fear famiſhing, when there was a well of water near her, that ſhe and the Lad might drink their fill: Ay, but ſhe did not know this well of water to be ſo near her. So the Believer's ſtate is ſafe and good; ay, but he does not know it. Jeſus Chriſt deals with his People as *Joſeph* did by his Brethren; he fed them, and nouriſhed them, and comforted them a great while, but would not diſcover himſelf to them, that he was *Joſeph* their Brother. A Believer that hath an Intereſt, may yet want the evidence of that Intereſt.

Thirdly, *Evidence of Intereſt is attainable, and it is the will of God that Believers ſhould give all diligence to make it clear.* It is poſſible that a Soul may come to ſee his own ſtanding in Chriſt Jeſus, and know unto his full ſatisfaction and rejoycing

in

in all conditions, that he is intereſted in him. Many Scripture-Saints have delivered it to us upon record, that they did attain to an evidence of their Intereſt. The Spouſe in the *Cant.* did attain an evidence of her Intereſt, *Cant.* 2.16. *My Beloved is mine, and I am his. Job* had a clear ſight of his Intereſt, *Job* 19.25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth,* &c. *David* had his Intereſt cleared up to him; *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear? Pſal.* 27. 1. *Paul* was aſſured of his Intereſt in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2. *For we know that if our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens: For in this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our houſe which is from Heaven.* And it is the mind and will of God that Believers ſhould give all diligence to clear their Intereſt, 2 *Cor.* 13.5. *Examine your ſelves whether you be in the faith, prove your own ſelves, know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you except ye be Reprobates.* And 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. *Wherefore the rather Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and your election ſure.* There is the command, which implies a poſſibility of attaining it. The poſſibility of it doth further appear, in that the Father and the Son have both ſent forth the Spirit to be a Comforter, to be a Witneſſer to thoſe that are in Chriſt; and his Office it is an Enſuring Office. The Spirit he comes, being ſent forth by the Father and the Son, into a poor heart that is full of fears, doubts, queſtionings and miſgivings and doth ſettle this Soul in the ſtedfaſt belief of his abiding Intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus, and Chriſt's everlaſting relation unto it. This you may ſee, *Rom.* 8. 16. *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirits, that we*

are the Children of God. And *Epheſ.* 1. 13. *In whom alſo after that ye believed ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe.* And a conſiderable part of the Scripture is given forth to this end, to clear up a Believers Intereſt in, and Relation unto Chriſt, that he may know his ſtanding in him, 1 *John* 5. 12, 13. There is *Life in the Son,* ſays he; and I write unto you, *that ye may know* that ye have an Intereſt in the Son, and ſo have life from him; and this is that which the Lord's People have gloried in, *Iſa.* 63.16. *Doubtleſs thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledgeth us not,* &c. And this is one end of that grand Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, to ſeal and enſure Believers. It is not only an Ordinance of Communion, but it is a ſealing Ordinance, wherein the Lord Jeſus does come and ſet upon the heart, clearing up the Soul's Intereſt in himſelf, and telling of him what he hath done for him, and ſealing all that hath paſt upon his Soul. It is ſometimes hereupon made a feaſt of fat things. It is an Ordinance of Joy. It is not a converting Ordinance, but it is an Ordinance of comfort unto thoſe that are converted, being often owned by the Lord, as a ſealing Ordinance, to confirm all that hath formerly paſt between God and the Soul: So as an evidence of Intereſt is attainable, and it is the will of God that Believers give all diligence to make it clear.

Fourthly, *The Intereſt and Relation that one Believer is owned in, with Chriſt, is not different in its nature and properties from what every Believer is owned in; but all that are intereſted in Chriſt, are equally intereſted in him.*

If you ſpeak of the Intereſt and Relation abſolutely,

lutely it is the ſame. Jeſus Chriſt is not more one believers than he is anothers, Jeſus Chriſt hath not given one believer a greater propriety in himſelf then he hath given another believer: but all are equally intereſted in, and related unto Chriſt, all have an equal ſhare in Chriſt. All have an equal ſtanding in Chriſt in point of intereſt and relation. Indeed if you ſpeak of intereſt and relation, *quo ad effectum*, as we ſay, if you ſpeak of it in reference to improvement and effects, there indeed there is a difference between believer and believer. One believer may improve Chriſt more than another, and one believer may grow up in Chriſt more then another: and one believer may in point of application and enjoyment poſſeſs more of Chriſt, more of the Grace of Chriſt, then another believer doth, but they are all equally intereſted in, and related unto Chriſt Jeſus: and the intereſt that one believer hath, is as pleadable, and as improvable as the intereſt that another believer hath, Jeſus Chriſt is equally a Head and a Huſband, and a Brother unto all his People, and they are equally Members of the ſame body in point of intereſt, though not in point of growth, ſaies the Apoſtle, in 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *But he that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit.* It is ſpoken in general, let him be an Apoſtle, let him be an eminent Saint, or let him be a meaner, or more obſcure Saint, let him be a ſtrong believer, or let him be a weak believer, if he be joyned to the Lord he is one Spirit, alike joyned, alike related, and alike intereſted.

Fifthly, *The believers intereſt in Chriſt is abiding, and can never be cruſh't, it can never*

ver be broken, it can never be violated; but the evidence of intereſt, though once obtained, and ſeem clear, may be obſcured and darkned: A Chriſtians joy, that is paſſing away, it is tranſient, but as to his intereſt, that is inviolable, and inſeparable; none can diſunite Chriſt, and the believer being once Goſpelly joined. So you have it ſpoken out by the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 35. and ſo on, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* No ſaies he, they ſhall not, they cannot do it, and *Hoſea* 2. 19. *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, and in loving kindneſs, and in mercy,* &c. I know full well what I do, ſaies the Lord, *I will betroth thee in judgment,* I know what the Soul is that I take, I take him, ſo as to keep him, and to maintain him, I will hold him, and never loſe him; I will do it *in judgment,* and it ſhall be a relation *for ever; I will betroth thee unto me for ever.* But now the evidence of the relation that is paſſable, that may be clouded, after you have had ſome clear diſcoveries of it. A Soul that is brought into the light, may be turned into the dark again; thus it was with *Job*: *Job* he had a very clear and full ſight of his intereſt at one time, that he glories in Chriſt Jeſus; *I know that my Redeemer liveth;* and yet the ſame *Job* at another time, *Job* 6. 4. *Tells us that the Arrows of the Almighty did ſet themſelves in array againſt him, the poyſon whereof,* ſaies he, *drinketh up my Spirit.* It was not the terrours of men, it was not the terrours of his condition, of his

his poverty, or of his ſores, or of his great diſgrace, but ſaies he, the terrours of God they are entered into my Soul, and ſo *David*, at one time he rejoyceth in Chriſt Jeſus; ſaies then, *though I paſs through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil*, Pſal. 23. 4. and another time he cries out, *Why art thou caſt down O my Soul, why art thou diſquieted within me?* And in another place, hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? are his mercies clean gone? he mourns after the Lord, and complains as one that was baniſhed from his face; though your intereſt cannot be ſhaken Chriſtians, yet the evidence of your intereſt may be darkned, the love of Chriſt Jeſus to your ſouls may be ſo obſcured, as you may be left without the feelings of it. And the Soul that is ſometimes under comfortable manifeſtations, and filled with joy, with peace, and with comfort, may at another time be darkned with clouds, with vails, and with curtains, and know not where he is; the ſeal of the Spirit of the Lord may be ſo defaced, as that you cannot tell what to make of it; the believer that is built upon the rock, can never be waſht off the rock, yet the waves may daſh againſt him upon the rock, he may be ſorely daſht upon the rock, though he cannot be waſht off; though your intereſt ſtands ſure, yet the evidence of your intereſt is not ſure, it is a paſſable evidence.

6. *Senſe of intereſt is in a ſoveraign hand, and is given out to whom the Lord pleaſeth, and when the Lord pleaſeth*: The Lord is pleaſed Soveraignly to act in the ſealing, and enſuring, and comforting of his People; ſometimes he will

come in upon a believer at his firſt converſion, and will fill him with joy and gladneſs that ſhall abide upon his Soul many years; and ſometimes the believer ſhall wait upon God from ordinance to ordinance, and follow him many years in the dark, and not have a diſcovery of his love; ſometimes the Lord will give a Soul no ſight of his intereſt, nor evidence of his relation, until he come to die; and ſome believers have walked with the evidence of Gods love in their hearts, almoſt all their daies, and when they have come to die, they have died in the dark. Senſe of intereſt is under a ſoveraign diſpenſe, both as to the perſons to whom it is given out, and as to the time when, and as to the way and manner how.

7. *Though the intereſt that believers have, and are owned in with the Lord, is the ſame, and is not different as to its nature, and properties, yet the evidence of the intereſt will admit of degrees in different perſons, and alſo in the ſame Perſons at divers times*; thoſe that are taken into relation with Chriſt Jeſus, they are all owned in a near, bleſſed, intimate relation, as I told you before, ſo that there is no difference in the relation, neither is the relation an encreaſing relation, indeed the benefits of the relation, they are encreaſing; but the relation it's ſelf is not encreaſing. A believer is not more a Child of God afterward, then he was at firſt, when the Spirit of adoption came upon him, but the evidence of the intereſt that admits of degrees; the relation its ſelf is capable of an improvement as to the advantages of it, but that is not all, but the evidence of the relation is ſometimes clearer, fuller

ler, and more ſatisfying then at ſome other times. It is ſaid, *Prov.* 4. 18. *That the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*: A believer hath a little ſight of Chriſt; a glimmering of Chriſt through the cravis; this may be improved, and it is poſſible that the Soul may come into a full aſſurance of its intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus; ay, and it is poſſible you may be aſſured more at one time then at another. Therefore Chriſtian, the little joy that thou haſt, may grow to a great deal, and the ſmall apprehenſions that thou haſt of Chriſt, may greatly encreaſe in thy Soul; and in this reſpect the day of ſmall things is not to be deſpiſed.

8. *It is poſſible that believers may diſingenuouſly act upon low principles in their earneſt purſuits after ſealings and enſurings*: I pray mark it, aſſurance, it is the Flower of Faith, it is the growth, the improvement, the flouriſhing of Faith, it is the fragrancy, the odour, and the ſweetneſs, nay, the very brightneſs of faith, the ſealings of the Spirit, they are the high ſtrains (as I may call them) of the Spirit in and upon the hearts of believers. And yet it is poſſible that the believer may act upon low principles in his eager purſuits of the ſealings of the Spirit, that is ſuch an high act: Then does the believer act diſingenucuſly in a purſuit after an evidence of his intereſt, when he preſſeth after the ſenſe of his intereſt, more for peace and comfort, then to improve his intereſt unto more grace and holineſs. Your intereſt in Chriſt hath two ſtreams, the one runs with grace, and

the other runs with peace and comfort: now then does the Soul diſingenuouſly act, when he preſſeth more after the ſtream of peace & comfort, then he doth after the ſtream of grace and holineſs; then is the believer acted upon low principles, when he advanceth the ſenſe of intereſt, above the intereſt, or if you will, thus, when the deſires of the ſenſe of intereſt do over-ballance the deſires of more grace and holineſs upon the intereſt. Therefore in all your eager purſuits after the ſealings of the Spirit, conſider the principle (Chriſtians) upon which you act, ſearch whether there be no diſingenuous actings n your ſpirits, in your eager deſires after aſſurance.

9. *Satan will indefatigably endeavour to darken your evidence, and to obſcure the ſenſe of intereſt.* Satans deſign is to keep Souls as long as he can from a cloſure with Chriſt, he will meet the Soul in all waies, if poſſible, to turn him out of his way; and if he cannot do that, his next deſign is to obſcure your evidence, and to darken your ſenſe of intereſt, that ſo he may make you to walk heavily, and in the dark, he will follow you with falſe reports, and falſe ſuggeſtions, he will hint to you this falſity and the other, if poſſible, to make you to believe a lye, and to deny what Jeſus Chriſt hath done, and to deny your intereſt, and ſtanding in him, that it may be is clear upon undenyable grounds and demonſtrations; the Devil you know came to Chriſt with this very temptation to make him to queſtion the truth of his relation to God, though the Devil knew it well enough that Je-

ſus

ſus Chriſt was the *Meſſiah*, and the true Son of God; yet he comes and ſets upon him with this temptation, if poſsible, to make him queſtion; *If thou beeſt the Son of God*, then do ſo and ſo. And he levels at the Believer in the ſame manner, and his deſign is to keep you in the dark, to rob you of all the peace, and comfort, and joy, that you might have upon the ſenſe and evidence of your Intereſt.

Tenthly, *There are many that preſume upon a groundleſs confidence, that they have an intereſt in Chriſt, and yet are wholly ignorant of the nature of a Goſpel-Intereſt.* There are many that do promiſe themſelves great things in and from Chriſt Jeſus, and yet they are wholly ignorant of him; they have hopes of large bleſſings that ſhall come in by Chriſt, and yet are ignorant of Chriſt, and the nature of a cloſe with Chriſt that gives right to him. Doubtleſs the fooliſh Virgins had hopes, that as to the bulk of them, were as large and as promiſing as the hopes of the wiſe Virgins were; they never at all queſtioned their admittance when the Bridegroom ſhould come. In *Deut.* 29. 19. *And it ſhall come to paſs when he heareth the words of this curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imaginations of my heart*, &c. So when we are diſcourſing of the terrours of the Law, that do belong to perſons unintereſted in Chriſt; there are many that bleſs themſelves in their hearts, and ſay, Theſe things do not belong to us: And when we are opening the comforts that Believers have in Chriſt, thoſe that are ſtrangers to Chriſt will preſume and ſay, All theſe are mine, *Micah* 3. 11. *The Heads thereof judge for reward, and the Prieſts there-*

of teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, Is not the Lord among us? no evil can come upon us. In the midſt of all their wickedneſs, they would ſtill preſume upon an Intereſt in the Lord, and think all ſhould go well with them. My friends, what think you of the Church of *Laodicea*? they were a people of a very great and high profeſſion; they ſtood in a Goſpel body, and lived under the enjoyment of the great Priviledges of a Goſpel-ſtate, and they promiſed themſelves that all was well with them; and yet ſee what the Lord ſays, *Rev.* 3. 17. *Becauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and encreaſed with goods, and have need of nothing, and knoweſt not that thou art poor, and miſerable, and wretched, and blind, and naked.* They had a profeſsion upon them, and they thought there was a great deal in that: They were in a Church-ſtate, and they thought that would ſerve their turn: They did enjoy Church-Priviledges, and they thought upon it that their condition was good, and that they might well ſay, Now we are rich, we are Profeſſors in a Church-ſtate, we are under the common and ſacred bleſsings of the Goſpel; and who better than we? We are rich, but ſays the Lord, you ſay ſo, but I ſay otherwiſe; you ſay you are rich, but I ſay you are poor; you ſay you are full, but I ſay you are empty; you ſay you are encreaſed with goods, and have need of nothing, but I ſay you have nothing and have need of all things. Verily my friends, this is a deceivable Age, an Age wherein many do not only deceive others, but their own Souls, and therefore it concerns you to enquire whether the Lord be your God, or no? and not to ſatisfie your

ſelves

ſelves with general notions of the Lord's being your God.

In the Eleventh and laſt place; *An evidence of Intereſt obtained, maintained, and Goſpelly managed, will be of ſingular advantage to a Chriſtian in his whole Chriſtian courſe.* You do not know (Believers) you that are careleſs in and about the clearing of your ſtate, you do not know what a change a Goſpel ſight of your Intereſt in Chriſt will make in your hearts; an evidence of your Intereſt will expel all your fears, and will reſolve all your doubts, and will cauſe a calm in your hearts, whatſoever the preſent ſtorm is. Why, if that we could look into the hearts of many, or moſt of us, I believe they would be found very tempeſtuous; ſtorms they threaten, ſore fears are ready to overwhelm, and doubts are even ready to ſwallow up a Chriſtian; why, an evidence of your Intereſt will remove all theſe, (Chriſtian) an evidence of your Intereſt will make all in Chriſt Jeſus precious to you, and will ſtrangely raiſe and inhaunſe the price of Chriſt, and the bleſsings of Chriſt in your eſteem. The evidence of Intereſt, O how precious will it make the Blood of Jeſus to you! O how precious will it make the Death of Jeſus to you! O how precious will it make the Life of Jeſus to you! O how precious will it make the Offices of Jeſus to you! when you can ſee that you are concerned in his Blood; that Jeſus he is your Surety, your Mediator; that he hath ſuffered for you, and ſatisfied for you; that he is your forerunner in Heaven; this will make all of Chriſt exceeding precious. An evidence of Intereſt is that that will carry your Souls chearfully through all ſufferings that do or may befal you in

the way of Chriſt. There are reproaches that Believers meet withal in the way of Chriſt, and the ſenſe of Intereſt will help you to bear them all. There are great loſſes that we are expoſed to in bearing our Teſtimony to the Truths of Jeſus; ſenſe of Intereſt will bear you up under all: Why, we have a building of God that is above. It is ſaid of thoſe in the *Hebrews*, that they did not regard their outward comforts, *knowing that they had in Heaven a better and an induring ſubſtance.* Senſe of Intereſt will bear you up under all changes of providences, when the Lord is taking, as well as when he is giving: Why, will the Soul ſay, there is ſtill enough in Chriſt; Chriſt is ſtill full; my Jeſus is full; though I am robbed, he is not robbed; though I have little or nothing, Jeſus Chriſt he hath all, and Chriſt is all, and all his fulneſs is mine. Senſe of Intereſt will raiſe your hopes and expectations upon Chriſt Jeſus. My friends, now we look upon Chriſt, and have low thoughts of him; we look upon Chriſt, and our expectations are not raiſed upon Chriſt: We come to an Ordinance where Chriſt is diſcovered and diſplayed in the riches of his Death, and in the glories of his Life, and our hearts are not raiſed upon this; why, but becauſe we have not the ſenſe of our Intereſt: The ſenſe of Intereſt will raiſe your expectations, and will comfort you againſt the thoughts of death. *Now Lord*, ſays good old *Simeon*, *letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy Salvation, Luk.* 2. 29. 30. And ſays the Apoſtle, *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all.* The ſenſe of Intereſt will lay you in againſt all fears of the approaching Judgment; inſtead of being afraid

afraid of it, it will make you long for it, when the Soul comes to ſee, and know, and be aſcertained that the judge of the Court is his friend, and is in relation to him, and hath loved him ſo as to lay down his life for him, and hath ever been deſigning upon him in a way of love and grace; this Soul will not be afraid to appear before him, but will long for the day when he ſhall come to ſee his Jeſus clothed with glory. So as a clear evidence of intereſt in Chriſt obtained, maintained, and goſpelly managed, will be of ſingular advantage unto a Chriſtian in his whole Chriſtian courſe.

SERMON V.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

THe Propoſition was this,

Doct. *That there is enough in Jeſus Chriſt alone for the Souls full rejoycing and triumph, whatſoever his ſtate and condition is in this world.*

Now we propoſed;

Firſt, To give you ſeveral introductory particulars by way of premiſe.

Theſe we have diſpatched. And ſhall now pro-

proceed to conſider what are the grounds of a believers darkneſs about his intereſt.

2. *It may be ſaid in the ſecond place, if there be ſuch ſolid and ſubſtantial grounds of joy in Chriſt Jeſus for the believing Soul, at all times, and in all conditions; what is the reaſon then that believers are ſo often in a dark, dubious, uncomfortable, ſhattered ſtate, that they are ſeldom able in any ſtedfaſtneſs of ſpirit to look up unto Chriſt Jeſus, and glory in him?*

Anſ. 1. I anſwer; *The darkneſs of the believers intereſt doth oft-times ariſe from a looking more unto ſuch things in the examination of himſelf, as argue the height of an intereſt, then to ſuch things as do diſcover the truth of an intereſt.* They do fix upon ſuch things as are diſcoveries of a grown ſtate in Chriſt, when as they ſhould fix upon ſuch things as do diſcover an in-being in Chriſt; they propoſe to themſelves that corruption muſt be ſo and ſo brought under, and mortifying work muſt be carried on to ſuch a height, or elſe they can have no grounds of their intereſt in Chriſt; they propoſe to themſelves ſuch a meaſure of love, as muſt be flaming to Chriſt at all times, or elſe they think they have no love at all, they think they muſt have ſuch a meaſure of faith, as to believe without ſtaggering, or elſe they have no part in Chriſt. Now hereby they do enſnare their own Spirits, and encreaſe their darkneſs. But you ſhould look more at ſuch things, as argue the truth of an intereſt, then at thoſe things that do argue the growth and improvement of that intereſt.

Secondly, *Darkneſs of evidence doth oft-times a-*

riſe

riſe from the believers viewing his wants, and overlooking his preſent receits. Jeſus Chriſt hath done a great deal for him, and hath given out a great deal to him, and hath made a wonderful change in him, he cannot deny it if he be put to it; but he overlooks all this, and conſiders his preſent wants, his weakneſſes, his ſhort comings, his failings, his ſmallneſs of ſtrength, his ſtaggering before a temptation, the uncertainty of his Spirit in his walking with God, and he bears the ſtreſs of his condition upon his preſent wants, not conſidering what Jeſus Chriſt hath already done, nor conſidering that the work is gradually carried on. Now Chriſtians if you would lay your ſelves fair for the Spirits Goſpel evidence in your ſouls, then you muſt take in the encouragements of your condition, as well as your diſcouragements, you muſt not only inſiſt upon your diſcouragements, but conſider alſo what Jeſus Chriſt hath done, and what a change he hath begun to work, and what have been the movings of your ſouls towards him, from divine influences upon your Spirits.

Thirdly, *The darkneſs of evidence, or obſcurity of intereſt do oft-times ariſe from the prevailings of ſin in the heart, upon which Chriſt ſuſpends.* Sin that rallies, that gathers head in the Soul, that preſſes forward, and the Soul gives way to the temptation, and is overcome, and upon it darkneſs does ariſe; this was *David's* caſe, *David* was aſſured; ay, but ſin prevailing in his heart, drove him into the dark, that all the joys of the holy Spirit were for a time taken from him, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8, 9. *And* Nathan *ſaid unto* David, *thou art the man, thus ſaith the Lord* God *of* Iſrael,

Iſrael, *I anointed thee King over* Iſrael, *and I delivered thee out of the hand of* Saul, &c. *Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his ſight?* I have done all this for thee ſaith the Lord, & thou haſt deſpiſed my commandment, and done evil in my ſight. So the Lord Jeſus ſpeaks unto the Soul: I have thus and thus manifeſted my ſelf to thee. I thought it not too much to take thee into communion with my ſelf; I thought it not too much to dandle thee upon my knee, and to give thee the aſſurance of all that I have done for thee: But thou haſt wickedly departed from me, and broken my Commandments, and it is juſt with the Lord now to ſuſpend; prevailings of ſin will cauſe a ſuſpenſe. You know that *Abſolom* upon his rebellion, was excluded for a while from his Fathers Houſe, he muſt not ſee his Fathers face: juſt thus it is with a Soul, when it hath turned aſide into ſome way of folly, after it hath provoked the Lord, the Lord he hides himſelf from him, he won't let him ſee his face, he muſt not come into his preſence to ſee him, and to rejoyce in the light of his countenance as formerly he had done. The prevailings of ſin after Grace do many times cauſe a ſuſpenſe.

Fourthly, *Darkneſs of evidence is occaſioned from the Souls crediting the reports of Satan, that lead him to deny what Jeſus Chriſt hath done for him and in him, upon undenyable demonſtrations of the power of his Grace in his heart:* Satan he will be alwaies putting the Soul forward to entertain hard thoughts of God, and will be making falſe reports in his heart, contrary unto the

the experiences that his Soul hath had; Now when the Soul will take up a report of Satan, againſt a clear and viſible demonſtration of grace upon the heart, and will joyn with Satan, and ſay, ay, this is true, there hath nothing paſt upon my Soul; Chriſt hath not loved me, Chriſt hath not taken me nigh unto himſelf, neither hath he in truth and reality done any thing yet for me, upon the Souls thus falling in with, and arguing upon the reports of Satan, does he help to darken his own ſtate, and to cloud his intereſt; Satan is indefatigably induſtrious to obſcure our intereſt, and to keep us in the dark. Now he will alwaies ſtand by you, and be alwaies ſpeaking to you, if he ſee that his teſtimony is once received and credited. Therefore beware how you hearken unto him, who is ever an enemy unto your intereſt, and unto your ſenſe of intereſt.

Fifthly, *Darkneſs of evidence doth ariſe from our frequent neglects of the Spirit both in a way of duty, and alſo in a way of comfort*; The Spirit of the Lord doth attend us, and he is calling of us up to obedience, and ſpurring of us forward to cloſer walking with God in obedience to his commands. Now when the Soul doth refuſe to comply with the Spirit, and doth not obſerve his voice, nor obey his commands, but is ſilent unto his earneſt motions in it, upon this is the Soul more and more darkned, for the Spirit does hereupon withdraw, when we refuſe his aids and aſſiſtances in the duties unto which we are called; he offers us his help to ſtand by us, and to lead us, and to ſtrengthen us, and we ſet by his help,

help, and we will venture upon duties in our own ſtrength, not reſting upon him for ſtrength and power, and the Spirit is hereby provoked: Or, when we neglect him in a way of comfort; he would clear our condition to us, but we will not believe what reports he makes in our hearts; he would ſettle us, and we will not be ſettled; he offers us conſolation, and we refuſe his conſolation, and yet complain of our darkneſs, *Job* 15. 11. *Are the conſolations of the Lord ſmall with thee?* Why, the conſolations of the Lord are ſmall with many Souls; for they refuſe them, and they think they do well to refuſe the comforts that are offered them, and yet they mourn over their want of comfort; hereby they grieve the Spirit, and they wound the Spirit, and they quench the Spirit, and it is not like then that the Soul ſhould be aſſured. You have theſe expreſſions in Scripture, *Epheſ.* 4. 30. *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are ſealed unto the day of Redemption.* And 1 *Theſ.* 5. 19. *Quench not the Spirit.* And *Iſa.* 63. 10. *But they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit, wherefore he was turned to be their enemy,* &c. Why, my friends, this is often our caſe, we rebel againſt, and vex the holy Spirit of God, and he becomes our enemy, that is, he ceaſeth to comfort us, and he ceaſeth to ſettle us, and he ceaſeth to eſtabliſh us; he ceaſeth to fill us with joy and with comfort in and about our Intereſt.

Sixthly, *Darkneſs of evidence doth oftentimes ariſe from, and is occaſioned by remiſneſs in holy duties, wherein God uſeth to manifeſt himſelf unto us:* When we neglect our ſpiritual watch, and lie under or act under the weight of ſpiritual ſloth, deadneſs of heart, careleſneſs and lightineſs of ſpirit in our wait-

ings

ings upon God. This was the Spouſes caſe, *Cant.* 5. 3, 4. *I have put off my Coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them? My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him,* Verſe 5. *I aroſe to open to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himſelf,* Verſe 6. Acts of communion were not ceaſed: The Spouſe did not decline Duties and Ordinances, but grew remiſs and ſluggiſh, and ſlighty, and careleſs in the duties of communion: She had *put off her Coat, and ſhe could not put it on.* Her Beloved knocked, but ſhe could not open to him preſently; ſhe muſt make him wait a while. Here were ſome workings of heart, and ſome genuine affections in the Spouſe towards Chriſt, for ſhe ſaid, *My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him:* There were ſome movings of heart towards Chriſt; ay but ſhe moved ſlowly, and was careleſs in her ſpiritual frame, and behold ſhe looks, and her Beloved was gone: Here was a ſuſpenſe, and darkneſs grew upon her condition. My friends, this is often our caſe; we let the fire of the Altar of our hearts go out, and our affections they grow dead, and we loſe our ſpiritual fervency; we loſe the ſpiritual ſavour of communion with God in Ordinances of Communion, and Chriſt Jeſus withdraws. There is a ſuſpence of manifeſtations of favour and darkneſs encreaſeth.

Seventhly, Again, *Darkneſs of evidence doth ſometimes ariſe from unkind and unworthy Jealouſies of the love of Chriſt's heart to us, notwithſtanding long ſtrivings with us.* The Soul knows not how to believe that Jeſus Chriſt is in earneſt with him, when it

it comes unto his own particular caſe: then he entertains hard thoughts of Chriſt: O ſurely Chriſt doth not mean me, ſurely Chriſt is not in the way of Grace with me, although he cannot deny, being put to it upon a ſerious examination, but that there is a ſtrange alteration in his Soul; ay, but he is alwaies queſtioning of the truth of Chriſt in his way to him, not but that he believes that Chriſt is in good earneſt in the deſign, ay, but he doth not know how to believe that Chriſt Jeſus is really engaged in a deſign of love upon his heart; no, this he queſtions, he thinks that the propoſals that he makes, are not in good earneſt, that Jeſus Chriſt doth not mean him: That Jeſus Chriſt doth overlook and paſs by his Soul, and it is others that he is ſeeking after, and others that he is deſigning upon, and by theſe unworthy jealouſies he does provoke Jeſus Chriſt, and it is juſt with Chriſt to leave the Soul a while to its ſelf, that will not be perſuaded to have good thoughts of him.

8. Again, *Darkneſs of evidence doth ſometimes ariſe from, and is occaſioned by our inconſiderateneſs of the preſent ſtate of our own hearts, and inadvertency to what hath paſt upon us*: There is a work wrought in him; ay, but he hath not been ſo wiſe as to obſerve the motions of Chriſt Jeſus in his comings in, and in his dealings with him, he hath not kept an account of the goings of God with him, but hath been very remiſs in the obſerve of the ſtate of his heart, as he hath paſſed on in the way, following of Chriſt, and wai-

waiting upon him in ordinances, and hence he can make nothing of his condition, he cannot ſay that the work of Grace is ſo and ſo wrought in him, becauſe he hath not been obſervant to gather up what hath paſt upon his Spirit.

9. Again, *Darkneſs of evidence doth ſometimes ariſe from an ungoſpel modeſty that dares not believe ſuch good things of its ſelf.* There is a kind of ungoſpel modeſty that ſome Chriſtians do expreſs, wherein they would diſcover a great deal of unworthineſs in themſelves, and a great deal of lowlineſs of Spirit, but in it they do but deny what Jeſus Chriſt hath done, and wrong their own caſe; O to think that Jeſus Chriſt hath been dealing with them, and hath made powerful applications of his blood unto them; and hath united and reconciled them unto himſelf; O they cannot tell how to believe this of themſelves; an intereſt in Chriſt is a great thing, and a heart change is a mighty change: I dare not think, ſaies the Soul, that the Lord hath done this for me, who am ſo vile, and ſo unworthy, and thus the Soul ſtands & reaſons againſt all the experiences that he hath had of God, and denies the comforts of it.

10. Again, *In the laſt place, Darkneſs of evidence doth ſometimes ariſe from peremptory concluſions of the iſſues of our ſtate upon the reports that ſenſe makes upon all inquiries.* The reaſon of our darkneſs is becauſe we lay the ſtreſs of our condition upon ſenſe, and upon what we can feel in our ſelves, and not upon a naked venture upon Chriſt Jeſus; not upon a Goſpel throw upon

Chriſt Jeſus; whatever be the iſſue, but the Soul goes to its feelings, and makes a judgment of its ſtate upon and from them; when he can find his heart warmed for Chriſt, when he can find his Spirit under any Goſpel enlargement for Chriſt, when he can find his Graces begin to grow and thrive, and when he can find ſpeedy returns made unto all his ſeekings after the Lord, then he concludes, now all is well; here is an intereſt, and behold the fruits of it: But now when the Souls Graces are alittle clouded, when he miſſes of that enlargement that ſometimes he hath experienced: And when he comes under ſome ſtraitneſs, and when Jeſus Chriſt is a while ſilent unto his prayers; why, then he concludes againſt himſelf; O here is no intereſt, why, if I were in Chriſt Jeſus, it would be otherwiſe with me, Chriſt would anſwer me, and Chriſt would enlarge me, and Chriſt would heighten and brighten my Graces, Chriſt would not leave me in ſuch an uncomfortable condition, he would fill me, and lift me up, and ſet me on high; O ſurely there is nothing of truth and reality that hath paſſed upon my Soul: Now Chriſtians, while you draw up peremptory concluſions of the iſſue of your ſtate, upon the reports of ſenſe in your hearts, you will never come to be ſetled, and eſtabliſhed, while you are in this world: concluſions drawn from changeable, mutable principles will never be relieving nor comforting to you. Well, theſe things briefly may ſuffice for the ſecond propoſal, what might be the grounds of a believers darkneſs in and about their intereſt and evidence.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We ſhall proceed unto the third particular, and that is this:

Qu. *If it be thus, that Believers are often times in the dark in and about their Intereſt, and have not the evidence of their relation in Chriſt clear, what ſhould the Believer do in the interim until the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to diſcover and unfold himſelf to him, and ſeal and confirm all that he hath done for him, and beſtowed upon him?*

Anſ. There are nine or ten particulars that I ſhall lay down here in way of Direction.

Firſt, *In caſe of darkneſs of evidence, muck the root of faith: Or, if you will take it thus, ſtrengthen and double the direct act of faith, when you are not able to put forth a reflex act of Faith.* There is a direct, and there is a reflex act of Faith; the direct act of Faith is an act of recumbence; it is an act of relyance upon Jeſus Chriſt; the reflex act of Faith is the Soul's glorying and triumphing in Chriſt Jeſus, that he hath made a cloſe with. Now Chriſtian, if thou haſt not the aſſuring act of Faith, then be ſure that you ſtrengthen Faith in its cloſing act, and in its believing act, wherein it reſts on Chriſt Jeſus alone; go oftener unto Chriſt, and there determine thy Soul, and reſolve ever to wait upon him, and to abide at his footſtool; the believing act of Faith, or the direct act of Faith, that I may call the firſt act, and the reflex act of Faith, I may call the ſecond act of Faith. Now Chriſtian, if you be not able to come up to the ſecond act of Faith, then be often repeating the firſt act of Faith; be often rolling your Souls upon Chriſt Jeſus, and by this means you may come to be aſſured; for the direct act of Faith hath a tendency in it to carry thee

up unto a full aſſurance in Chriſt Jeſus, and therefore be often redoubling that act, thou doeſt not know how ſoon the joy of thy aſſurance may come in.

Secondly, *Upon the darkneſs of evidence, take notice of, and rejoyce in the ſtrengthenings and upholdings of the Spirit, though for the preſent you are without the ſealings and enſurings of the Spirit.* Why, let it not be a ſmall thing unto thee, that though thou art not comforted, and though thy Intereſt is not cleared, yet thou art kept waiting upon God. Who is it that upholds thee againſt all thy diſcouragements? Couldeſt thou hold out of thy ſelf? Couldeſt thou bear up when there ſeems to be no returns made? nothing but diſcouragements in thy way? Thou cryeſt again and again, and haſt no return, but a ſeeming repulſe; who is it (think you) that upholds you? doubtleſs it is the Spirit of the Lord: Who was it that upheld the Woman of *Canaan*, when Chriſt Jeſus did chide her, and ſeem'd to give her a repulſe? doubtleſs whilſt he ſeemed outwardly to diſcountenance her, he was ſecretly upholding and drawing her heart nearer to himſelf, or elſe ſhe had fainted. Now, if thou haſt had a heart to continue waiting upon God, and thy deſires and reſolutions are ſtill to follow the Lord, take notice of theſe upholds of the Spirit, and bleſs God for theſe, and it may be the Spirit in a little while may go on to aſſure thee.

Thirdly, Again, *Upon the darkneſs of evidence, and want of aſſurance, labour to heighten true grace and holineſs*: Strive to encreaſe & to grow in grace, for that will be more to thy advantage than to bend thy deſires wholly for comfort and for aſſurance.

It

It is a greater mercy for God to give thee a new meaſure of grace, than to give thee a new degree of comfort. It is a higher priviledge. There is more in grace, than there is in comfort; for grace hath a more immediate tendency to God's glory, the other tends more immediately to thy ſatisfaction and joy. There is more in a little grace, than in a great deal of conſolation. Now it may be the Lord ſeeth that thou art not fit for comfort, nor yet fit for ſettlement, and for peace, and therefore he holds thee in the dark. Now the heightening of grace will fit thee for the enjoyment of an Evidence. The higher grace is in the heart, the more fair the Soul lies for an evidence; the more grace thou haſt, the more fit thou art for the joys and conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt: Therefore ſtrive to heighten grace and holineſs upon the want of an evidence.

Fourthly, *Keep in thy way waiting upon the Lord, though the Anſwer is delayed.* Thou art ſeeking to be aſſured, and thou art waiting for an evidence of thy Intereſt, and yet it doth not come. Well, hold on Chriſtian, and do not give over until the Anſwer is given in; *He that believeth maketh not haſte*: Wait quietly and patiently upon the Lord, preſſing after him, that he would remember his Word from Ordinance to Ordinance; but do not give over; know, that whilſt the Lord doth ſuſpend the evidence of your Intereſt, he calls you to abide in a waiting poſture, and therefore continue to watch and pray.

Fifthly, *Diligently attend all diſcovering Ordinances, but bound your deſires after a ſenſe of Intereſt in waiting upon the Lord in the waies that he hath conſecrated for the diſpenſe.* God hath been

pleaſed to appoint many ordinances for us to wait upon him in, wherein he is pleaſed to make known himſelf. Sometimes he doth it in one ordinance, and ſometimes in another; ſometimes he will come in in prayer, and ſometimes in meditation, and ſometimes he will come in in preaching, and ſometimes in that great ſealing ordinance of the Goſpel, the Lords Supper. Now attend upon the Lord in all ſealing ordinances, but bound your deſires, (I pray mark) I ſay bound your deſires in the waies that the Lord hath conſecrated for the diſpenſe, do not expect that God ſhould work a miracle to confirm you, don't think that there muſt be a voice from Heaven to ſettle you, and ſatisfy you, don't look for ſome miraculous expreſſions or impreſſions upon you, but bound your deſires after the ſenſe of your intereſt in his own way; and that which makes me mention it, is this: That Satan doth ruſh many Souls upon this, they cannot believe an ordinary evidence, and a ſmall ſign won't ſerve them, but they muſt have ſome immediate appearance from Heaven; an immediate teſtimony from Heaven, in ſome miraculous way upon their Spirits, or elſe they cannot think that their ſtate is good; and the deſign of Satan here is to drive you into ſuch a way wherein you ſhall certainly meet with a diſappointment, and being under a diſappointment, then you may more eaſily, and more ſtrongly queſtion your ſtate. But we are not to expect revelations, nor miraculous operations, but to wait upon the Lord in his own conſecrated waies that he hath appointed for the diſpenſe of pardon, of peace

and

and comfort, and an evidence of our intereſt.

Sixthly. Again, *Look upon and rejoice in the dawnings of the day, when thou canſt not ſee the Sun in its noon day brightneſs*; my meaning is, bleſs God for a little, let it be never ſo ſmall that he hath given to thee, and wear it with much thankfulneſs, though thou haſt not a full aſſurance of thy intereſt, yet bleſs God that thou haſt a liberty to follow Chriſt; thou haſt not a full ſight of thy ſtanding in Chriſt; ay, but bleſs God that thou haſt a liberty to cry after Chriſt, thou maiſt cry after Chriſt, though for the preſent thou canſt not rejoyce in Chriſt; well, if the Lord hath given thee a heart for this, thou ſhould'ſt magnify his name; let the work be never ſo ſmall that is in thy Soul, yet if thou beeſt in the way to Heaven, bleſs God for this. It is matter of comfort to thee in thy preſent ſtate (Chriſtian) that though thou haſt not yet aſſurance, yet thou art in the way to be aſſured, though thou haſt not yet a full evidence of thy intereſt, thou art in the way of following of Chriſt, & thou doſt not know how ſoon thou maiſt have the evidence of thy intereſt. It is a comfort to a Child to conſider, that though he is in ſome remoteneſs from his Fathers Houſe, yet he is in his way upon his journey to it: So Chriſtian, though thou haſt not all, yet thou art in the way to more, thou art in the way to be aſſured, and in the way to the full poſſeſſion of Chriſt; take notice of this, and bleſs God for it.

Seventhly, *Preſer ſervice for Chriſt, before aſſurance in Chriſt, and eſteem duty for and towards Chriſt, before conſolation in Chriſt.* It argues a

very low and mercenary ſpirit to act only for, or towards the Lord upon the feelings of our intereſt in him, or only for the comforts that do attend a ſenſible intereſt in him; no, we muſt follow Chriſt wherever he goeth, and prefer ſervice for Chriſt before comfort in Chriſt, and reſolve to follow Chriſt, and to ſerve him, whether he do ſettle us, and comfort us or no: It is a very filial, genuine Spirit in a Child to ſay; well, let my Father give me a portion, or deny me a portion, yet I will ſerve him, though my Father diſinherit me, yet I will ſerve him; ſo the believer ſhould ſay, he ſhould prefer a command before a promiſe, and aſſiſtance for duty before incomes in duty. Now it may be Chriſtian, thou haſt failed here, therefore advance thy eſteem of the command, and advance the honour of duty and ſervice for Chriſt, and let theſe things be uppermoſt in thy heart, and in time the Lord may more fully appear to thee to ſettle thee, and to comfort thee whileſt thou art ſerving of him.

8. *Again upon the riſing of new darkneſs, have recourſe unto the former experiences that thou haſt had of peace, joy, and comfort in believing:* God it may be doth with-hold a new word, becauſe he would have thee go to the old word, that he hath ſpoken before, and God may with-hold a new ſign, becauſe he would have thee go to the old ſign that he gave thee for a diſcovery before; now in preſent daies of darkneſs often reflect upon what formerly thou haſt enjoyed in order to thy hope and confidence, and make uſe of that. And then,

Ninthly,

Ninthly, *In the ninth place, Be you kind unto all the Lords mourners that are companions with you in darkneſs.* I mean, learn to ſympathiſe with thoſe that want the light of Gods countenance. The Lord (it may be) in with-holding a ſenſe of intereſt, doth deſign to make thee more ſenſible of anothers condition in the dark, that thou mayeſt know how to ſympathiſe with him in his ſorrows and tribulations; ay, and to comfort others with the conſolation wherewith the Lord hath comforted thee. Therefore be you kind and affectionate unto thoſe that are companions with you in darkneſs, and pray with them, and pray over them, and expreſs the affections of your Souls to them in all your remembrance of them; and in a little while the Lord may come in for to lead you forth into the company of thoſe whoſe hearts are made to rejoice and be glad in the light of his countenance, and in the evidence of their own intereſt in Chriſt.

SERMON

SERMON VI.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation.

FRom hence we have obſerved,

Doct. *That there is enough in Chriſt Jeſus alone, for the Soul's full rejoycing and triumph, whatſoever his ſtate and condition is in this world.*

We told you in nine particulars what the doubtful Soul ſhould do in the interim, until he can clear up his own intereſt, and ſtanding in Chriſt Jeſus. We ſhall only ſuperadd one particular more.

Tenthly, *If thou beeſt (Soul) ſtill in the dark in and about thy Intereſt after narrow and deep ſearches and enquiries, reſign up thy ſelf unto the Lord Jeſus, and ſtand to his allowance, and be willing to work in the dark, whilſt the Lord ſhall keep you in the dark.* Be not your own chuſers and carvers in this thing, but leave the Lord to chuſe for you. Indeed, we are not to reſt ſatisfied in our ſpirits without an evidence of our Intereſt, becauſe it is attainable, but as to the comfort of our Intereſt, and the Joy and Peace of our Souls upon the Intereſt, we ſhould reſign up our ſelves unto the Lord Jeſus, and leave him to make the diſpoſe of our ſtate; and

and this is the way to come unto a ſpeedy ſettlement and aſſurance: But I ſhall not enlarge here, but procced unto the fourth thing propoſed.

Fourthly, And that is, to give you ſome Signs and Evidences of your Intereſt and ſtanding in bleſſed Jeſus. And as we ſay generally, Cauſes are beſt known by their Effects; Trees are beſt known by their fruit; Life is beſt known by motion; ſo intereſt in Chriſt is beſt known by the effects of Intereſt. And that you might know what Jeſus Chriſt hath done in you, and is doing for you, do but conſider

Firſt, In the firſt place, *That there is upon the Soul's Intereſt in Chriſt, a Divine Principle of Life infuſed into the heart by the Lord Jeſus, unto whom he is united, which becomes the ſpring of his ſpiritual motions towards Chriſt, and of his profeſſion of Chriſt.* Intereſt in Chriſt is a Life-Intereſt, and there is a Divine Principle of Life that upon it is infuſed into the Soul, that becomes the ſpring of his ſpiritual motions. This Principle of life is variouſly ſet out in Scripture; ſometimes it is called the New Creature; *If any man be in Chriſt he is a new creature*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. A New Creature denoteth life; ſometimes it is ſet out by the word *life*; *He that hath the Son hath life*, 1 *John* 5. 12. Sometimes it is called *the Divine Nature*: *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promiſes, that by theſe ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Now there is life in the Divine Nature, & the Divine Nature infuſed, becomes a Life-Principle in the heart where it is infuſed, and is the ſpring of its ſpiritual motions. This is ſet out ſometimes by ingraftment, as the Syence is ingrafted into

to the Stock; there is a conveyance of life upon the ingraftment, and upon the union: Thus the Graft or the Syence doth receive ſap & nouriſhment from the Root, whereby it comes to live. Now, ſays Jeſus Chriſt in your ſpiritual union with him, *I am the Vine*, ſays he, *ye are the branches*, John 15. 5. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit.* And *Rom.* 11. 17. *And if ſome of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild Olive Tree, be grafted in amongſt them, and with them partakeſt of the Root and fatneſs of the Olive Tree.* *Abraham* is only inſtrumentally here ſpoken of, as God was pleaſed to own him, and honour him to be the Father of all Believers; but Chriſt Jeſus is principally and effectually the Root, the Stock that Believers are ingrafted into; he is the Root that both *Abraham* and all Believers ſtand in, and grow upon, and they partake of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of that good Olive Tree: Sometimes it is expreſſed by *an incorporation*, as the Head and the Members do make up but one Body, and every Member united unto the Body, it doth receive, life, ſpirit, ſenſe, motion and ſtrength from the Head. Now, ſays the Lord Jeſus, *Ye are all Members of my Body*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12, 13. We are all Members of the ſame Body, and ſo have the ſame Head, from thence is life, ſpirit and grace, and nouriſhment conveyed into every part. Now from hence it is that Jeſus Chriſt is called the Life of Believers, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me.* And *Col.* 3. 4. *When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear*, &c. So as Chriſt he doth convey and infuſe a Principle of Life into the Soul, that is intereſted in himſelf, and upon that account he is

called

called *a quickening ſpirit*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. (*The ſecond* Adam *was made a quickening ſpirit*,) that he might give Life to all thoſe that are united to him, and intereſted in him. And this ſpiritual Life that we receive from Jeſus Chriſt, is the Life of our Life, and the very Soul of our Soul in all our motions God-ward, and it becomes the ſpring of our ſpiritual profeſsion, and of all our movings towards God. The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, is not moved by an artificial ſpring, but he doth act and move from a life, ſpring, from a living ſpring, which is the Principle of Divine Life, that in his Intereſt in Chriſt he receiveth; and this it is that puts him on; this it is that conſtrains him; this it is that moves and acts him, in all his bendings and inclinings God-ward. They that are intereſted in Chriſt, they do deſire Chriſt, and move towards Chriſt upon a Principle of Life, ſo as they cannot be ſatisfied without Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *As new born Babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* The Babe or Infant does cry after the Breaſt upon a natural Principle of Life; natural Life is the Principle of its crying. So doth the Believer move towards, and make after Chriſt, from a ſpiritual Principle of Life; and that Principle of Life that he hath received from Chriſt, is the Divine Spring of all his Divine Actions, or of his Religious Actings. The Soul is not moved only upon a Principle to ſatisfie and ſilence his Conſcience, nor yet to get himſelf a name to live, to make himſelf honourable among the people that make a profeſsion of Chriſt; nor yet upon the account of any ſecular advantage; but there is a Divine Spring in his Soul of ſpiritual Life, that he

hath

hath received from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and this works up his heart to the frame he is in, and cauſeth him to move towards the Lord, and makes him unſatisfied without Jeſus Chriſt. Now my Friends, bring your Soul-ſtate into an examination by this, What change is there wrought in your hearts? Do not eye your profeſſion ſo much as your hearts. Conſider what work hath paſt upon your Souls: Are you ſpiritually renewed? Have you received Life from Chriſt? Is there ſuch a real ſpiritual Change wrought in your Souls as doth amount to a New Creature? And have you received of the Divine Nature from Chriſt? And is there a living Spring that moves your Souls in all your motions towards Chriſt? If ſo, it argues an Intereſt; but if the Spring of your motion be from without, it is a ſign that it is artificial, and not living; and ſo it argues no Intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus.

Secondly, *Intereſt in Chriſt mixeth concerns, and may be diſcovered by reciprocal acts in a mutual Intereſt.* The Intereſt that the Soul hath in Chriſt, is never alone; but the Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt Jeſus, hath Chriſt Jeſus intereſted in him; ſo as the Intereſt is mutual, and upon a mutual Intereſt concerns are mixt; ſo as Chriſt and the Believer have one concern between them: Chriſt is intereſted in the Believer's concerns, and the Believer is intereſted in Chriſt's concerns: The Believer concerns himſelf for Chriſt, and Chriſt concerns himſelf for the Believer. The Believer is intereſted in all that Chriſt is, and in all that Chriſt hath; and Chriſt is intereſted in all that the Believer is, and in all that the Believer hath: The Believer hath a room in Chriſt's heart, and Chriſt hath a room in the Believer's

liever's heart. The believer hath a propriety in Chriſt, and Chriſt hath a propriety in the believer; ſaies the Spouſe, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*, the intereſt is mutual. Jeſus is my Jeſus, ſaies the believing Soul: Chriſt is my Chriſt, he is my Saviour, and I have an intereſt in his love and grace, and I have an intereſt in his life, in his power, in his ſtrength & fulneſs; and Chriſt, he hath an intereſt in me alſo, he hath an intereſt in my love, he hath an intereſt in my heart, and in my ſtrength, and in all that I have and am: and the intereſt being mutual, mixing concerns, it may be diſcovered by reciprocal acts, that is, as Chriſt makes over himſelf to the Soul, ſo the Soul makes over himſelf unto Chriſt, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him becauſe he firſt loved us*: he hath ſet his love upon us; and there will be a reciprocal acting in the Soul towards him, he will alſo ſet his love upon Chriſt; Chriſt indeed is the firſt mover, and ſo the glory muſt be given unto him, but the intereſt it is mutual, and the acting is reciprocal. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt he makes over himſelf to the Soul to be his: The Soul he accepts of Chriſt when tendered, and that is not all, but he makes a return unto Chriſt, devoting himſelf unto him, yielding and reſigning himſelf unto Chriſt to be his, to walk in his waies, *Ezek.* 16. 18. there you may ſee the actings of Chriſt towards the Soul, ſaies he, *I ſpread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedneſs, yea, I ſware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, ſaith the Lord, and thou becameſt mine, I ſware unto thee*; there the Lord did paſs over himſelf to the

the believer. Now there are reciprocal actings in the Soul towards him, *Deut.* 26. 17. *Thou haſt avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, to walk in his waies, and to keep his Statutes,* &c. *and the Lord* v. 18. *hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people as he hath promiſed*; here are reciprocal acts, now Chriſtian, if thou wouldſt make a diſcovery of thy ſtate, to know whether thou art intereſted in Chriſt; Conſider what intereſt Chriſt hath in thee, what intereſt he hath in thy heart; what a ſhare he hath in thy affections, and what a place he hath in thy life, is there a kind of ſacredneſs in thy heart for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in a holy reſignation to him. So there is in the Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, *Cant.* 4. 12. *A Garden encloſed is my Siſter, my Spouſe, a Spring ſhut up, a Fountain ſealed*: She is under a peculiar dedication to, and reſerve for her Lord, whom ſhe hath devoted her ſelf unto, and is as a Garden encloſed, Now Chriſtian, if thy heart lieth in common, and there be no ſacredneſs upon it, and no ſecret reſerve of it, it ſpeaks but ſadly for thee; but where there is a dedication unto Chriſt, and if you can find Chriſt intereſted in you, it is an evidence that your are intereſted in Chriſt, for we can never move towards Chriſt, till he firſt moveth towards us: We can never chooſe Chriſt, until Chriſt hath firſt choſen us. If that thou canſt find thy heart open for Chriſt, and towards Chriſt, it is a clear evidence that Chriſts heart hath been firſt opened to thee; all our love to Chriſt is but the reflection of Chriſts love to us: *Mary* did not call *Raboni*, till

Chriſt

Chriſt firſt called *Mary*. So as if thou findeſt thy heart under a dedication to Chriſt, that Chriſt is thy joy and delight, and hath full rule and liberty in thy heart, that thy heart is opened, or at leaſt opening, and there are outgoings of Soul in thee towards the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; It doth argue that thou haſt an intereſt in him, and that he hath begun to draw thee, that he hath caſt the skirt of his Grace over thee, and made thee his.

Thirdly, *The Soul that hath an intereſt in Chriſt is brought under the ruling power of Chriſt, ſo as he chooſeth him to be his only Lord.* That Soul hath as yet no intereſt in Chriſt, that deſpiſeth the government of Chriſt, that refuſeth obedience unto the Scepter and dominion of Jeſus Chriſt; theſe you know are reckoned among Chriſts enemies, that ſay concerning him, *this man ſhall not reign over us*; you have a clear Scripture for this, *Iſaiah* 63. 19. *We are thine*, How did it appear that they were the Lords? Becauſe it was implicitely and tacitly aſſerted that the Lord did *bear rule over them*. And how did it appear that they were none of Chriſt's, and Chriſt none of theirs? Becauſe he did *never bear rule over them, neither were they called by his name*: So then, thoſe that ſlight and deſpiſe the Scepter of Chriſt Jeſus, and refuſe allegiance to this glorious King of Heaven, are none of his Subjects, and ſo have no part nor intereſt in him: but now that Soul that hath an intereſt in Chriſt, is brought under the rule of Chriſt, and Chriſt doth exerciſe and diſplay an over-ruling power in his heart, that brings him unto his

foot, and he is enabled to live in a profeſſed ſubjection to the Scepter, and Kingly power of Chriſt Jeſus; upon this intereſt the Soul hath in Chriſt, his Spirit is ſatisfied in the government of Chriſt, he is reconciled unto all the commands of Chriſt, and he delights in the dominion of Chriſt, and he freely and chearfully reſigns up himſelf unto the Scepter of Jeſus Chriſt. Lord (ſaies the Soul) here I am, rule over me. Chriſt never intereſts a Soul in himſelf, that he doth not bear the ſway in its heart, and command the powers of its Soul, *Pſal.* 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power*: When Jeſus Chriſt makes a willing people, that is, diſplays the power of his Grace, and brings home a Soul, and gives it an intereſt in himſelf, he ſubjects the heart unto his Government, he makes the Soul freely willing to be ruled by the laws, and by the Authority of Chriſt Jeſus; no laws ſeem ſo deſirable unto him as the laws of Jeſus; no rule, no Scepter ſo pleaſant as the Scepter of Chriſt, and all the commands of Chriſt are choſen by him, as being equal, righteous, holy, pleaſant, and good: the Spirit is reconciled to Chriſt Jeſus in the whole of his Goſpel Government over the heart of the Chriſtian. *My Lord and my God*, ſaies *Thomas*; theſe alwaies go together; *My God, and alſo my Lord.* And this particular I ground upon, and gather out of my Text, he is become *the God of my Salvation*; how ſhall I know that? He is *my Lord*, ſaies the Prophet, *I will rejoice in the Lord*; the title *Lord* notes Dominion and Soveraignty. Now the Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, rejoyceth

ceth in the Dominion and Soveraignty of Chriſt Jeſus; *I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* The inference that is drawn from this Scripture, for our preſent purpoſe is this, that the Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, will rejoyce in the dominion of Chriſt, or doth receive Chriſt Jeſus as a Lord, and as a Lord doth rejoyce in, and under him. Indeed there may be much weakneſs in his obedience; I don't ſay that he doth exactly, and to a tittle walk up to the rule to fulfill every command of God; No, I know there is a great deal of weakneſs in the ſtrongeſt believer upon earth, and through the ſtrength of corruption, and the violence of temptation, he may ſometimes be foyled and born down, ay, but when he is ſo, ſtill his heart is right, and he loves the commands of Chriſt, that he cannot come up to, and he honours the rule of Chriſt, and to his utmoſt makes way for the ſway of the Scepter of Chriſt in his Soul, though he may be born down by temptation; yet his love remainsſtill unto every command of Jeſus, *Rom.* 7. 25. *I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; ſo then with my mind I my ſelf ſerve the law of God, but with the fleſh the law of ſin.* Saies *Paul*, I am born down, I am overcome, but I don't juſtify my ſelf herein, but I bleſs God, ſaies he, that my heart is ſecured, my love doth not abate, I have not waveda command through my diſſatisfaction in it, I have not been diſobedient to a command, becauſe I judged it unreaſonable, or were diſſatisfied in it; No, but my heart, that ſtands right for thoſe commands that I cannot reach in my life; *with my mind I*

my ſelf ſerve the law of God. So *Romans* 1. 9. ſaies the Apoſtle, *For God is my witneſs whom I ſerve with my Spirit in the Goſpel of his Son*: ſo as you ſee the Spirit that ſtands clear, and is under a conſtant and full engagement, though it may be the life doth not diſcover that evenneſs that it ſhould; with my Spirit, ſaies he, I ſerve the Lord. It may be ſaid in the caſe of the temptation of a believer, as was ſaid concerning the Spouſe, *I ſleep, but my heart awaketh*; thus it is with many a poor Soul, he may be brought into a ſleepy condition, and be ſtaggers and ſtumbles in his way, he finds it ſo difficult, but ſaies he, while I ſleep my heart awaketh, his declenſions do not ariſe from diſſatisfaction, but his love is reconciled to the command ſtill, and he honours thoſe precepts that he is not able to come up to. Now Chriſtian, bring your condition to this touchſtone, if thou haſt a heart that doth ſlight the government of Chriſt; and if thou canſt not bear the ſtrict rule and dominion of Chriſt Jeſus over thy Soul, if that thou haſt thy exceptions, againſt the Scepter of Chriſt Jeſus being lifted up in thy heart; it is a ſign that thou art not yet intereſted in Chriſt, *thou never didſt bear rule over them, they were not called by thy name*; I pray remember that that rule that thou deſpiſeſt, is the only ſaving rule, and that power that thou refuſeſt to ſtoop to, is the only ſaving power, the only bleſſed and bleſſing power. But on the other ſide, if thou canſt find that thy heart is open unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as he is the Lord, as he is inveſted with all power, as the Father hath given all Authority

thority unto him, if thy heart be open to him, and thou doſt love his Laws in their holineſs and ſtrictneſs, and his Government and Rule for its cloſeneſs; and if way be made in thy Soul for the Throne of Chriſt to be ſet up, it argues thou art intereſted in Chriſt; for thoſe that are Chriſt's doth the Lord bear Rule over.

Fourthly, *The Soul's Intereſt in Chriſt may be known by the diſtance that the heart ſtandeth in from the power and intereſt of his former ſtate that Chriſt Jeſus hath overturned.* The Soul before his coming over to Chriſt was under the Rule of another Lord, and was in ſubjection to another Intereſt, to the power and intereſt of ſin, and that bore ſway in his heart, and commanded his life; he yielded up himſelf a ſervant to ſin, and devoted himſelf unto the ſervice of ſin. This the Apoſtle ſpeaks out, *Rom.* 6. 16, 17. *Know ye not that to whom ye yield your ſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of ſin unto death, or of obedience unto righteouſneſs; but God be thanked that ye were the ſervants of ſin, but ye have obeyed from the heart the form of Doctrine which was delivered to you.* And in 19, and 20 verſes you have it again. *And* ſays he, *When you were the ſervants of ſin, ye were free from righteouſneſs.* He doth plainly ſhew, that they were formerly ſervants to another Intereſt; they were engaged in the ſervice of ſin; they acted ſin as in a ſervice; as a ſervant obſerves, and reſpects, and obeys his Maſter, ſo doth the natural heart obſerve, reſpect and obey ſin; and it is his Lord; it hath the commanding power of his Soul; and it is a moſt pleaſant ſervice to the ſinner, though he will find it a ſad ſervice in the latter end;

yet it is a moſt pleaſant and a moſt delightful ſervice; therefore a ſinner's walking in ſin, and gratifying the luſts of the fleſh, is called his pleaſure, the pleaſures of ſin; he takes pleaſure therein: O! it is his meat and drink to ſatisfie the luſts of his heart, in gratifying this Lord that is over his Soul. Now my Friends, your Intereſt in Chriſt may be diſcovered, by the diſtance that your hearts ſtand in from the power and intereſt of this Lord, that Jeſus Chriſt hath overthrown, that is a conſtant enemy to your in-being and ſtanding in Chriſt. And that I may help you to make a right judgment of your ſtate in reference to this particular, I ſhall open to you in ſeveral particulars, what this diſtance is that the Soul ſtands in unto the intereſt of ſin, that Jeſus Chriſt hath overthrown in the heart upon his making over himſelf to the Soul.

Firſt, *There is upon the Soul's Intereſt in Chriſt this diſtance unto ſin, his former Lord, that he proclaims war againſt it, and becomes its profeſſed enemy.* It may be the life of a Chriſtian is not at preſent a Conquering life; ay, but it is a Conflicting life, *Rom.* 7. 23. *But I ſee another Law in my members warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of ſin which is in my members.* Well, there is oppoſition for oppoſition, as ſin riſeth up againſt him, ſo he riſeth up againſt ſin: And as ſin upon his Intereſt in Chriſt declares againſt him, ſo he declares againſt ſin, and he watcheth it as one enemy watcheth the motions of another; and he taketh all waies, and uſeth all endeavours to foil and bring under this enemy.

Secondly, *The oppoſition that is carryed on and managed in the heart againſt ſin, it is general.* It is not

not an oppoſition in one part only, but it is an oppoſition that the whole Soul doth engage in, and all the powers of the Soul are concerned in it. It is not only an oppoſition in the Conſcience, but there is an oppoſition in the Affections as well as in the Conſcience; and there is an oppoſition in the Will, as well as in the Conſcience and Affections, and alſo an oppoſition in the Judgment; both the Conſcience and the Affections, the Will, and the Underſtanding and Judgment, do all diſcharge againſt ſin; and all the renewed powers of the Soul enter into a ſtrict combination againſt the intereſt of ſin. The Conſcience that lays loads upon it whenever it appears, and the Affections they declare againſt it, and the Will that reſolves againſt it, and the Underſtanding and Judgment do diſcover it, and witneſs againſt it. The oppoſition that is made it is general.

Thirdly, *In this diſtance that the heart ſtands in unto ſin upon its Intereſt in Chriſt, the heart in its moſt deliberate actings ſtands in an irreconcileableneſs unto it.* The oppoſition that is made is not upon a ſudden motion; it is not upon a paſſion of the Soul that in cool thoughts will be called in again; but the Soul in its moſt deliberate actings ſtands in an irreconcileableneſs unto it. That the Affections will never be enticed over to ſin again, the Love will never be invited over to ſin again; indeed he may be overpowered to ſin, but he will never be reconciled to ſin more; his Love and Affections can never be gained to ſin again, but the Affections are ſo broken, that the diſtance will ever remain, and the Soul will alwaies ſtand in, and act upon an irreconcileableneſs to it.

Fourthly, *The diſtance of the heart unto the in-*

ereſt of ſin upon the Soul's Intereſt in Chriſt, is univerſal unto all ſin. It is not only alienated and drawn from notorious and groſs ſins, that make a great noiſe in the world, or againſt ſome particular ſins, that his walking in will turn to his diſadvantage; but it ſtands at a diſtance from all ſin, from heart-ſins, as well as from life-ſins, from ſmall ſins as well as from great ſins; and from ſuch ſins as are connatural to us from inclination, complexion, and condition, and employment, and the like, the heart ſtands at an univerſal diſtance from all ſin.

Fifthly, *The diſtance of the heart from ſin upon its Intereſt in Chriſt, is unto ſin as it hath a contrary nature in it to the Intereſt of Chriſt in him.* He doth oppoſe ſin, not upon a particular, but upon a general account; he oppoſeth ſin as ſin, as it hath a contrariety in its nature unto the Lord, and the Intereſt and Dominion of the Lord in his Soul; and ſo he will oppoſe ſin while ſin is ſin, and whilſt there is any ſin remaining in him. The diſtance that his heart ſtands in unto ſin, is unto it as it hath a contrary nature in it unto Chriſt's Intereſt in him, and his Intereſt in Chriſt.

Sixthly, *The diſtance of the heart unto the Intereſt of ſin that Chriſt hath overturned, upon his having an intereſt in himſelf, it is ſuch as hates ſin in the temptation.* It doth not only hate ſin when it is committed, and when Conſcience lays hold upon him for the commitment of it; but it ſets the Soul at a diſtance from ſin in the temptation, whilſt it is a great way off; and hence we are commanded to abſtain from the appearance of evil; and the Saints they hate the appearance of evil; that which looks like a diſputable evil, the gracious heart ſtands at a diſtance

from

from it, or that which hath a probability in it of being an occaſion of ſin to him, that will the gracious heart ſtand off from; he will oppoſe ſin at a diſtance, and he hates and watcheth againſt ſin in the temptation, the heart ſtands at ſuch a diſtance from it.

Seventhly, *The diſtance of the heart from ſin is ſuch, that it chuſeth rather to ſuffer than to ſin: Nay, it will chuſe a great ſuffering before a little ſin.* It will ſay, Lord, any thing rather than ſin, and no burthen will be like the burthen of ſin to him; no weight like the weight of ſin upon his Conſcience; and therefore he ſays, Lord, any condition rather than to be driven upon a temptation whereby I ſhall ſin; any thing Lord but ſin.

Eighthly, *The diſtance that the heart ſtands in unto ſin upon its Intereſt in Chriſt is ſuch, as doth diſcover a great reluctancy of ſpirit, and deep ſearchings of heart upon the invaſions of ſin, and the Soul's paſſive captivities by it.* Probably he may be foiled and overcome by ſin, and many times againſt his will he is overcome; ay, but when he is ſo, he mourns, and he weeps, and that bitterly; he doth not juſtifie the fault; he doth not extenuate the offence; he doth not hide his tranſgreſſion but his Soul breaks out into mourning by reaſon of it, and that upon the paſſive captivities of the Soul by it, when the Soul againſt his will is overcome; he watches and he ſtrives to keep it under, and yet ſin is too hard for him, and whether he will or no ſometimes leads him captive, and carries him out of the way; he goes mourning into theſe captivities, and he groans when he falls into the hands of ſin, and when he is at any time taken a priſoner. Thus it was with

Paul;

Paul; *Paul* had an honeſt heart, he did labour againſt ſin what he could, and yet ſays he, I find that when I would do good evil is preſent with me; and there is a curſed Law in my members, that leads me captive to the Law of ſin, whether I will or no; he ſtrove, and conflicted, and watcht, and did his utmoſt, yet ſays he, I find a Law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent, and I am taken captive, but he groans under it; *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom.* 7. 24. It was one of the deepeſt and moſt ſorrowful complaints that ever the Apoſtle *Paul* made; and thus we find Scripture Saints upon Record, when at any time they have been overcome and led captive, it hath been a time of great ſorrow, darkneſs, mourning and bitter complaint to them. Now this is another part of the diſtance that the Soul ſtands in from ſin.

Ninthly, *The heart ſtands (upon his Intereſt in Chriſt) at ſuch a diſtance from ſin, that nothing will ſatisfie the Soul but the returns of death upon it.* Sin, that ſeeks the ruine of grace, and the deſtruction of the Soul; and the Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt ſtands at ſuch a diſtance from ſin, that he ſeeks, and deſigns, and labours to the utmoſt to hate ſin, and to purſue it unto death. It is not the pardon of ſin that will ſatisfie a true Believer. Let me ſay thus much, that if you be at no greater diſtance from ſin than this; that if the Lord will pardon you, all is well, and you will lay down the Cudgels, it is a ſign your heart is not right with Chriſt. If you have an Intereſt in Chriſt, you will be at a greater diſtance from ſin than ſo, the pardon of ſin will not ſatisfie you; if ſin ſhould be driven into the ſecret retirement

retirement of your Soul, and ſhould there remain among the ſtuff, yet this will not ſatisfie you. The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, is ſet upon the death of ſin as its enemy; and that is the meaning of thoſe Scriptures wherein we are called upon to mortifie ſin, and to crucifie ſin, that is, to deſtroy ſin, to be the death of it, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. *And they that are Chriſt's, have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts:* They are doing of it; ſin is dying, and mortifying, and crucifying, and it ſhall be crucified, and mortified, and ſlain, and appear to be wholly dead ere long: This is that that the Soul is ſet upon, the death of this body of death, the utter ruine and deſtruction of it; it will not be ſatisfied that ſin is a mortifying and dying in it, but the diſtance of the heart from it is ſuch, that it will not bear the being of it: Though it cannot drive out all theſe curſed Canaanites, to have the Land at reſt, and peace when it will; yet it will maintain the war, and abide the field, and never give over till ſin be wholly dead. Now I beſeech you Chriſtians, you who are deſirous to clear your own ſtate, bring your condition to a tryal upon this head, and examine what that diſtance is, that your heart ſtands in unto the Intereſt and Power of your former ſtate which Jeſus Chriſt hath overthrown; examine the diſtance that your hearts ſtand in unto ſin, in theſe nine particulars: Is the diſtance ſuch as that you have proclaimed & engaged in an holy war againſt it; Or do you only ſpeak ſlightly of ſin before men, and hide it in your hearts? Again conſider, Is the Conflict that you profeſt to be engaged in againſt ſin, general? Or is your oppoſition againſt ſin only in your Conſcience? Verily a natural man will

will oppoſe ſin thus. A Hypocrite's Conſcience may check him for ſin; a carnal man's Conſcience may ſometimes wound him for ſin, and ſpeak high againſt it, but is the oppoſition from the Affections, from the Will, and from the Judgment, as well as the Conſcience? Do all the powers of the Soul engage againſt it? And do they all combine againſt ſin to bring it under? If ſo Chriſtians, though ſin yet live in you, and ſometimes prevail over you to your grief and diſadvantage, yet you are of the better ſide, and have a promiſing evidence of your Intereſt in Chriſt. And again, doth your heart in its moſt deliberate actings ſtand in an irreconcileableneſs unto ſin? It may be the oppoſition thou makeſt againſt ſin, is only in a paſſion, or only ſome ſudden motion upon a diſadvantage that thou meeteſt with in thy ſinful waies; but conſider whether your Souls do deliberately ſtand in an irreconcileableneſs unto ſin; and whether your Affections be ſo engaged, that they refuſe to receive this object, becauſe your Souls loath it. Again, Is this diſtance univerſal to all ſin? It may be Soul, there are ſome ſins that thou wouldeſt pick at, and be willing to part with them; but there are ſome others that you are ready to ſay of them, O! they are but little ones; Good Lord ſpare them. Is the diſtance thy heart ſtands in to ſin, to all ſin, to heart-ſins as well as to life-ſins, to little ſins as well as to great ſins, to thoſe ſins that are moſt connatural, and that thy heart and thy diſpoſition doth moſt cloſe with? And then again, Is thy diſtance to ſin as ſin, as it hath a contrary nature in it to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to his bleſſed Intereſt in thy heart? then the Conflict will be abiding as long as there

is

is ſin remaining in thy Soul. Again, How ſtands thy heart unto ſin in the temptation? This verily is a diſcriminating Character of a Saint. Thoſe whoſe hearts are not rightly engaged, they may oppoſe ſin, and ſpeak highly againſt it, when it is committed, and when they have ſeen the ill conſequents and effects of it; but do you oppoſe ſin in the temptation, when it is a great way off? And do you ſhun and avoid, and flee from the occaſions of ſin? that which may probably be an introducement unto ſin? do you avoid that, and arm your ſelves againſt that? This will be an evidence to you that you are intereſted in Chriſt. And again, Do you chuſe rather to ſuffer than to ſin? Verily this is alſo a diſcriminating Character of the reality of your Intereſt in Chriſt. Another man may chuſe to avoid ſin, when he receives a prejudice by it, or when he cannot apprehend an advantage to the luſts and deſires of his own heart; Ay, but the gracious Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, it ſtands afar off from ſin, ſo as it ſays, Lord, any condition rather than ſin; any burthen rather than the burthen of ſin; any affliction, any grief, rather than ſin. And then, Do you conſider what reluctancies are in your ſpirits againſt the irruptions of ſin, and the paſſive captivities of the Soul by it? Where the heart is not right, it will have no great reflection upon a paſſive captivity; upon an active ſurrender he may, when he hath ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs, he may be made aſhamed of his folly; Ay, but a Hypocrite, a falſe heart, will never deeply mourn for a paſſive captivity, but there he will ſay, Well, I could not help it, it was not my fault, and ſo will be excuſing of it; as the Woman did; The Serpent beguiled me;

me, I intended no ſuch thing, I was ſeduced and overcome; a paſſive Captivity bears no great ſway in a falſe heart, but an upright Soul, he mourns over ſin, how paſſive ſoever he is in the prevailings of it, when he cannot prevent ſin, he will mourn over the prevailings of it. It will be his conſtant grief that he was led Captive, and that when he would do good, evil was preſent with him, and that he is overcome when he ſtrives to overcome. And again, conſider Soul whether there be any thing leſs then the returns of death will ſatisfy thee in thy purſuits of ſin? for the gracious Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt will purſue ſin unto death, reſtraining grace will not ſerve him, pardoning grace won't do, but he will be for the crucifying of the luſts of the fleſh, for the mortifying of ſin in his Soul, for the utter ruine and extirpation of it. Now Sirs, if you can find thoſe things in you, it doth ſpeak for you, and will help to clear your intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus.

Fifthly, *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt will prize the leaſt of Chriſt above the greateſt enjoyments out of Chriſt.* A little of Chriſt will be more to him then a great deal of the Creature; nay a little of Chriſt will be more to him then all the Creature; a little of Chriſts grace, a little of Chriſts love, a little of Chriſts Spirit, a ſmall income from Chriſt, the leaſt love token from Chriſt, the leaſt ſaving Goſpel manifeſtation and diſcovery of Chriſt; O 'tis the ſweeteſt diſcovery, and the moſt bleſſed enjoyment that ever his Soul had: Thus it was with *David* (if he be the Author of *Pſal.* 73. and *Aſaph*

Aſaph only the Pen-man;) *David* at once overlookt his Crown, and his Kingdom, and all his Treaſures that he had in the world, and the whole world that was before him, and ſaies he, *Lord, whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee, Pſal.* 73. 25. And ſo the Apoſtle *Paul*, ſaies he, *I count all things but droſs and dung in compariſon of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord*, Phil. 3. 8 Chriſt was more to him than all other things; and verily Chriſtians, ſo will it be with you, if your hearts be right; a little of Chriſt will be more to you then all the treaſures, pleaſures, and the glories and enjoyments of this whole world, and you will eſteem your ſelves more honourable with a little grace in your hearts, then with your Houſes full of wealth.

Now to cloſe, do but bring thy heart to this touchſtone, and do but conſider what it is that thy heart is moſt ſet upon, and what it is that will ſatisfy thee; if this world, and the comforts of it can ſatisfy thee without Chriſt, thou haſt no part in Chriſt; nay if thou preferreſt other enjoyments before a participation in Chriſt, thou haſt none of Chriſt; if thou haſt a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt, the manifeſtations of Chriſt to thy Soul, will be the moſt bleſſed manifeſtations, O the leaſt incomes of Chriſt will be as life from the dead. The leaſt love token, the leaſt intimation of his love, the leaſt ſaving effect and operation of his grace upon thy heart, and the encreaſe of communion with him: Theſe things will be the life, and the joy of thy Spirit. If thou canſt find it thus with thee, really

ly and in truth, that a little of Christ is prized in thy heart above the greateſt enjoyments out of Christ; it is a ſign and evidence that thou art intereſted in Christ. It may be Soul thou haſt but a little of Christ in thy heart, very little of Christ but a little of the grace of Christ, and but a little of the Spirit of Christ, and canſt do but little for Christ; ay, but the leaſt incomes of Christ, they are the ſweeteſt incomes to thee, and thy enjoyments of Christ are the moſt ſatisfying enjoyments, and thy Soul will prefer an opportunity of communion with the Lord Jeſus before great advantages otherwiſe: If it be thus with thee, it is an evident ſign that thou art intereſted in Christ, and thou mayeſt take comfort in thy preſent ſtanding in him.

SERMON VII.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

THe Propoſition is this,

Doct. *That there is enough in Chriſt Jeſus alone, for the Souls full rejoycing and triumph, whatſoever his condition and exigency is in this world.*

This

This we have cleared to you, and are now upon clearing up of the Souls ſtate, that he may know whether he hath intereſt in this full Jeſus: We have already given you five particulars that may be as ſo many evidences of a Chriſtians intereſt in Chriſt, and ſhall now proceed.

Sixthly, *In the ſixth place, The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, is under an over-ruling influence from Chriſt that ſecures the habitual inclinations of his Soul for Chriſt againſt all contrary invitations and drawings.* Particular acts are not a ſufficient concluſive ground of our ſtate one way or another: A Soul that hath no intereſt in Chriſt, may ſeem choice and ſingular in ſome actions and there may be a ſeeming lovely deſirable ſanctity upon him, and a Soul that is really intereſted in Chriſt, may by the power of a temptation be drawn into ſome unbecoming acts; ſo as particular acts are no ſufficient ground of an intereſt: and if you judge by them, you may eaſily be deceived, but he that is really united to Chriſt, is under a divine influence from Chriſt, that ſecures the habitual inclinations of his heart for him, that ſo the biaſs of his heart is towards Chriſt, and the full purpoſe of the Soul in its ſecret breathings and inclinings are after the Lord Jeſus alone. It may be when the temptation comes, he may be almoſt ſtaggered, but yet his heart ſtands right for Chriſt in the main, in whom he is intereſted, and though temptations may have a great power upon him, yet the biaſs of his heart will winde through all temptations unto Chriſt alone; thus it was with

Paul; there were contrary drawings in the heart of *Paul*, and the temptations that he met withal from the remains of indwelling ſin were very great, yet his heart under all ſtood right, and the habitual inclinations of his heart were for, and towards Chriſt Jeſus, and this was the Characteriſtical note of his in-being in Chriſt, *Romans* 7. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. You may ſee it at large, *For that which I do*, ſaies he, *I allow not, for what I would do I do not, but what I hate, that do I: if then I do that which I would not, I conſent unto the law that it is good*, &c. The old man it was riſing and rebelling in him, and did improve all its ſtrength, and its whole intereſt in his heart to draw him aſide; now, ſaies he, at this time when I was under thoſe ſhakings, then my heart was in the way of Chriſt, and I conſented unto the law that it was good, that which I did not, was that which I would do. And though I found a law in my Members that was warring againſt the law of my mind, yet ſaies he, I delight in the law of God after the inward man, there is my delight, the inclinations, the habitual inclinations of my Soul were not changed nor turned, but the ſecret workings and breathings of my Soul are towards the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And thus it was with *David*: *David* had many temptations, and rubs in his way, that had like to have turned him out of the way, but yet ſaies he, *Pſal.* 119. 20. *My Soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times*, and Pſal. 42. 1, 2. *As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee O God.* My Soul thir-

ſteth

ſteth for God, for the living God, when ſhall I come and appear before him? And ſaies the Prophet, *Iſaiah* 26. 9. *With my Soul have I deſired thee in the night, yea, with my Spirit within me will I ſeek thee early*; the night ſeaſon was a dark time, and it is probable his Spirit was very much endangered at that time by temptation, dark times are times of temptation, and his Soul at that time was almoſt overwhelmed in the conflicts of his Spirit, with the diviſions of his heart in the night ſeaſon. Now ſaies he, when it was thus darkneſs about me, temptation aroſe upon me, with my Soul, ſaies he, have I deſired thee. Then did my heart ſtand clear for Chriſt, though I could not diſcover my ſelf as I would: Now Chriſtians, if you would make a judgment of your own ſtate; do you fix your eye upon your hearts, and conſider how they ſtand, and ſecretly obſerve the habitual inclinations of your hearts, do you, as the expreſſion is, *Acts* 11. 23. *Cleave unto the Lord with full purpoſe of heart*? Thoſe that are intereſted in Chriſt, do with purpoſe of heart cleave unto the Lord. There is not only ſome good thoughts riſe in their hearts now and then, they have not only ſome ſcant deſires after Chriſt, or ſome ſudden motions upon their Spirits towards him, but the bent of their heart is towards Chriſt at all times, the breathings and longings of the heart is after Chriſt. Now thoſe that are under ſuch an influence from above, as to ſecure the habitual inclinations of their Souls for Chriſt againſt all contrary invitations and drawings, theſe are ſuch as have indeed an intereſt in Chriſt,

and this is the influence of the intereſt on Chriſts part upon your Souls?

Seventhly, *A Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt is ſo concerned in the concerns of Chriſt, as diſhonours unto, and diſhonourable reflections upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, bear hard upon his Spirit*: My Brethren, the Souls intereſt in Chriſt is a oneing intereſt, an intereſt that makes you one with Chriſt, and the Soul will be a ſharer and partner with Chriſt in all his diſhonours, in all his griefs, and in all his afflictions, Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks ſometimes of being wounded, and of being grieved, and of being offended. Now the Soul that is really intereſted in Chriſt, is offended where Chriſt is offended. The Soul that is really intereſted in Chriſt, will grieve over, & for whatſoever doth grieve Chriſt, either in himſelf or others, he will be wounded with that which doth wound Chriſt, and will mourn over that which is an occaſion or matter of mourning unto Chriſt, and doth bear heavily upon his Spirit, that which doth reflect diſhonour upon the name and glory of the Lord Jeſus. I remember what was ſpoken of our Lord Jeſus in reference unto his Father, and the concerns that he was oned in, *Pſal.* 69. 9. *For the zeal of thine Houſe hath eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen upon me*, both theſe paſſages are applied unto Chriſt Jeſus in the New Teſtament, *John* 2. 16, 17. there you may ſee the firſt paſſage applyed unto him, *And his diſciples remembred that it was written, the zeal of thine Houſe hath eaten me up*: Jeſus Chriſt you know came into the Tem-

Temple that was his Fathers Houſe of Worſhip, and there he ſaw his Father diſhonoured, there he ſaw his Fathers Worſhip corrupted and adulterated, and defiled, and he ſaw there great reflections upon his Fathers glory, and he was even eaten up with it: his holy zeal and paſſion for his Fathers glory that he was concern'd in, did carry him out even beyond himſelf to make him diſregard and neglect himſelf; *The zeal of thine Houſe hath eaten me up.* And ſaies he, *the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.* This you have applied to Chriſt, *Rom.* 15. 3. *For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf, but as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me.* Jeſus Chriſt he took up ſin, and he bore that ſin upon himſelf, that was a diſhonour unto his Father, and that was a wound unto his Father, and that his Father ſaid he was loaden and preſſed with, as a Cart is preſſed with Sheaves; he took up this diſhonour and reproach, and bore it upon himſelf, he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was afflicted and chaſtened for our ſins, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me; Chriſt he came, and he mourned over ſin, and he expreſſed the ſorrow of his heart, for that whereby his Father was diſhonoured; now the Soul that is really intereſted in Chriſt is ſo oned with Chriſt, as he hath fellowſhip with him in his diſhonour; and in his reproaches, and in all his ſufferings, he is a partner with Chriſt in his griefs, he is a griever with Chriſt, and a mourner with Chriſt, and a complainer with Chriſt; if there be any thing in his heart, or waies, that do offend Chriſt, he is offended and

diſturbed with this as ſoon as he eſpies it, and he cannot bear it, becauſe it offends the Lord Jeſus, that he is oned with: and this is that that makes true Chriſtians walk up and down with ſuch ſad hearts; what is the matter? Why, there is ſomething that they have eſpied in their hearts, that is offenſive to Chriſt, and they cannot bear it, and know not how to get rid of it, and there is ſomething in their walk and converſation that doth reflect upon the honour of the Lord Jeſus, and their Souls are wounded with it. And as to the ſins of others, that which is a reflection upon the name, upon the honour and glory of Chriſt lyes hard upon their Spirits; ſaies *David*, Pſal. 119. 136. *Rivers of water run down mine Eyes, becauſe they keep not thy law*; and *Jeremiah* 9. 1. 2, 3. See how the Prophet complains of that which the Lord doth make a complaint of: *They proceed from evil to evil, ſaith the Lord*; and *O ſaies he, that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep for this*. Hence the Saints are called Mourners in *Zion*, and we read of thoſe that mourned in the midſt of the Lords People, they mourned ſometimes for their own ſins, as diſhonouring Chriſt Jeſus. Thus did *Peter* when he had diſpleaſed the Lord, and was ſenſible of it, he goes out and weeps bitterly. And ſometimes they weep for the ſins of others, that they ſee the Lord is ſo much diſhonoured, and offended by the lives and converſations of Saints. Now by this make a judgment of your ſelves (Chriſtians) and bring your hearts to this touchſtone; if that you ſtand at a diſtance from the concerns of the honour of Chriſt Jeſus in the world; and

and you look upon the concerns of his glory as Alien, that you are not concerned in; and the diſhonours of Chriſt you are not touched with them, they make no impreſſion upon your Spirits, truly this ſpeaks very ſadly: But now on the other hand, if that you find your Spirits in fellowſhip with Chriſt, in all his diſhonours, if you find that whatſoever doth diſturb, diſpleaſe, and grieve the Lord, is a weight upon your Spirits, and that becauſe it is a weight upon the heart of Chriſt Jeſus, this is ſome evidence that you are intereſted in, and united unto the Lord Jeſus.

Eightly, Again, *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt is reſtleſs in all purſuits after Chriſt, until it can compaſs ſomething of him*: Chriſt is the center of the heart, and he cannot reſt out of Chriſt, neither can he be long ſatisfied without him, but is continually preſſing after a ſight of, and fellowſhip and communion with the Lord Jeſus, his heart being as it were ſwallowed up with him; lead him unto other things, and they won't ſatisfy him out of Chriſt; lead him unto ordinances, this won't do, if Chriſt be not there; advance him unto all Goſpel priviledges that give him a name and renown amongſt Saints, this won't ſatisfy him if he hath not Chriſt Jeſus there. Thus it was with the Spouſe, ſhe had loſt her ſight of Chriſt, and now ſhe had her ordinances ſtill, and her priviledges ſtill, yet this would not ſatisfy her, but ſhe goes from ordinance to ordinance, and from priviledge to priviledge, to ſeek after Chriſt, *O ſaw ye him whom my Soul loveth*? And truly I may ſay of ſuch a heart as is intereſted in Chriſt, as *Abſolom* ſpake

in another caſe, when he was well provided for, and had royal Princely accommodations; *O!* ſays he, *what is all this to me if I may not ſee the King's face?* 2 *Sam.* 14. 32. So, whatſoever, be the outward accommodations that a Soul hath that is intereſted in Chriſt, ſtill he will be ſaying, O! what is all this if I have not Chriſt? he will be reſtleſs in his purſuit after Chriſt, until he can compaſs ſomething of him. Now Chriſtians, examine your hearts by this; if that you can ſit down with ſomething ſhort of Chriſt; if that you can come to an Ordinance, and have no communion with Chriſt in the Ordinance, and yet are well ſatisfied; if that you can take up your reſt in the priviledges of the Goſpel, without the Lord Chriſt himſelf, it is a very ſhroud ſign that you are not yet intereſted in him; but if no Ordinance will pleaſe you, where Chriſt is not, no enjoyment will ſatisfie you if Chriſt be away; that your eye is upon Chriſt in and through all enjoyments, as the only reſt and center of your Souls, this is a good ſign of Intereſt.

Ninthly, In the ninth place, *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, makes his preparations, and his reformations in his heart, which Chriſt principally reſpects.* He that is united unto Chriſt, looks chiefly at the heart, which Chriſt looks chiefly upon, and his great care is to have his heart ſwept, cleanſed, purified, ſanctified, fitted and furniſhed for the Majeſty of Chriſt Jeſus: And heart-diſturbances, and heart-diſorders, are matters of great grief unto him, becauſe he knows that thereby Chriſt is diſpleaſed: Jeſus Chriſt takes up his abode with the Soul that is united to him. Now Chriſt's reſidence is in the heart, and the Soul that is united to Chriſt,

will

will principally look to prepare that Room where Christ's residence is to be; he will be in the use of all means to bring his heart into some Gospel decency for the entertainment of the Lord Jesus; and all that comes from him, it comes from the heart. The profession that he makes of Christ, it is a heart-rooted profession, and the change of his life it springs from the change of his heart, and the holiness and sanctity that he discovers and manifests, is holiness from the heart. Now Christians, examine your own hearts by this particular also; some preparations you make, some reformations you are able to shew, but are your preparations only life and conversation preparations? are they not heart preparations too? Or is your reformation only a life reformation, and not a heart reformation? They they that are not interested in Christ, they may prepare and reform; but they will look only to the washing of the outside of the Cup, and the adorning of the outward man, not the inward man; but now if your greatest care be upon your hearts, and your utmost diligence is to have them thorowly reformed, and to have them under a heavenly dispose for Christ, to make provision there, and to be fitted in the inward man for communion with the Lord Jesus; and in all your reformings you first begin there, and carry on outwardly as you are able to succeed inwardly; This is an evidence of an Interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tenthly, Again; *The Soul that is interested in Christ, lives not upon himself, nor upon his own actings, but upon Christ unto whom he is joyned.* The Soul that is brought into union with the Lord Jesus, he makes the Lord Jesus his all, and he leans upon

upon him, and ſtays upon him, and not upon any thing ſhort of him: Jeſus is full, and he lives upon the fulneſs of Jeſus; he comes hungry, and empty, and naked, unto Jeſus, to be ſatisfied, and to be clothed; he ſtays himſelf upon the merits of Chriſt, and he confides in the faithfulneſs of Chriſt; and he leans upon the power of Chriſt, and he acts by the ſtrength of Chriſt; he lives in all his whole Chriſtian courſe upon Chriſt. Says the Spouſe, *Cant.* 2. 3. *As the Apple tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my Beloved among the Sons. I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſt.* Here Chriſt was the Spouſe's all; ſhe got under his ſhade, and there ſhe reſted; and ſhe fed upon Chriſt, and lived upon Chriſt; *His fruit was ſweet unto my taſt.* The true Believer cannot ſtay upon any righteouſneſs but upon Chriſt's righteouſneſs, in whom he is intereſted; as you may ſee, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. *Yea doubtleſs I count all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt*, &c. Now Chriſtians, examine your own hearts by this alſo; What is it that you live upon? Is it upon Chriſt? or, Is it upon your ſelves? If you can ſatisfie your ſelves with a righteouſneſs ſhort of Chriſt's, that is, a righteouſneſs of your own, it is a ſign you are not yet intereſted in him; if you do not go wholly out of your ſelves, to make loſs of all for Chriſt, it is a ſign you are not yet intereſted in him; if you act by your own ſtrength, and do not look up to Chriſt for

for ſtrength, it is a ſign you are your own men, that you are not yet in Chriſt; and if your greateſt care be not to pleaſe Chriſt, it is a ſign you are not yet in Chriſt; but thoſe that are in Chriſt, they live upon Chriſt, they do not live upon duties, they do not feed upon bare Ordinances, but they feed upon Chriſt Jeſus, and they truſt only to his righteouſneſs, and they eye his merits, and conſider his faithfulneſs, and act Faith upon his Offices; they truſt in him, and they have reference to Chriſt at all times.

Eleventhly, Again; *The Souls that are intereſted in Chriſt, will with boundleſs deſires be alwaies preſſing after Chriſt, and never think they have enough of him:* Not only will they be reſtleſs in their purſuits after Chriſt, till they can compaſs ſomething of him; but there are boundleſs deſires in them after Chriſt, and after more of Chriſt; a little of Chriſt will not ſatisfie a ſoul that is intereſted in him; but though he have a little of Chriſt, he will ſtill be preſſing after more, & think all that he hath received is but little; he muſt have more of him, more communion with him; and he muſt be brought into a higher conformity to him; he cannot reſt with a little of Chriſt, his deſires will be boundleſs, that he will alwaies in his participation of Chriſt be ſtill looking forward, preſſing after perfection, and reaching and deſigning to apprehend as he is apprehended. A Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, hath alwaies a riſing, reaching deſire in him after Chriſt. This you may ſee, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14. *Not as though* (ſays he) *I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after,* &c. *I preſs towards the mark for the prize of the high Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Jeſus. What an enlarged heart had this man *Paul?* he was come to a very high pitch in Chriſt Jeſus, to make loſs of all for him, and to glory in him, and in his righteouſneſs; and yet Brethren, ſays he, *I I count not my ſelf to have apprehended.* O! ſays he, What have I yet of Chriſt? What have I received yet of the Spirit of Chriſt? O how unlike am I yet unto Chriſt!. how unſuitable is my heart yet unto Chriſt! how little of Chriſt is yet in my heart! *Brethren, I count not my ſelf to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, I am reaching forward,* ſays he. The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt will have noble, genuine workings of heart ſuitable to his inbeing in Chriſt; he will alwaies be deſirous of him, and preſſing after more of him, never ſatisfied with any thing that he hath; though he will bleſs God for the leaſt he hath, yet he will not be ſatisfied with any thing that he hath, but will be preſsing after more, and his language is alwaies, Give, Give. Now Chriſtians, do you examine your own hearts by this? if you have really an intereſt in Chriſt, it will have ſuch an influence upon your Souls, as alwaies to prompt you on to a preſsing after more of Chriſt, to get further into him, and to know more of him, and to be filled with the Spirit of Chriſt. A little grace, grace enough to carry you to Heaven, will not ſatisfie you, but your deſire will be to be made to abound in all grace; your deſire will be *to be holy as he is holy, and to be pure as he is pure, in all manner of converſation*; and you will never leave craving and deſiring whilſt there is a corner in your hearts to fill, and whilſt there is room for a hungring and thirſting deſire to riſe in your hearts after the Lord Jeſus. Now, if that you can ſatisfie your ſelves with any thing of Chriſt, and ſit down

with

with a bare profeſsion of Chriſt, without any thing of Chriſt in your hearts; if you have not theſe holy hungrings and thirſtings in your Souls after high meaſures, and full enjoyments and manifeſtations of Chriſt, it doth ſpeak very ſadly; but if there be ſuch boundleſs deſires, as we have told you, after Chriſt, it is ſome ſign of Intereſt.

Twelfthly; Again; *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, values himſelf, perſons and things as they are in, or have of Chriſt in them:* He meaſures all perſons and things by their reference to Chriſt; and he judges that it is Chriſt Jeſus only that makes them to differ; and whatſoever is excellent in any perſon, or in any thing, it is from Chriſt Jeſus, and it hath no more excellency in it than what it hath in and from the Lord Jeſus; he doth not value himſelf by his outward enjoyments; he doth not value himſelf by his gifts, and by his natural accompliſhments, though they be very great and large; he doth not value himſelf by his priviledges in his Goſpel-ſtate, but he counts that he is what he is in Chriſt Jeſus: *I am* (ſays he) *what I am, by the grace of God*; and if he cannot eſpy the grace of Chriſt in him, he yet counts that he hath nothing; and if he cannot find ſome hopes of an Intereſt in Chriſt, he counts that he is nothing; he owns and makes reckoning of himſelf as he ſtands in, and hath reference to Chriſt. If *Paul* would have made a judgment of himſelf by his gifts, who had greater? If *Paul* would have judged himſelf by his priviledges, who had higher? but he judgeth theſe nothing; *By the grace of God*, ſays he, *I am what I am.* And ſo he reckons of all others; he eſteems of perſons as they are in Chriſt; and thoſe that have moſt of Chriſt in them,

are

are moſt excellent; he loves a poor mean Soul in Chriſt, more than the greateſt and richeſt man in the world out of Chriſt; if any perſons have more of his love, more of his heart than others, it is thoſe that have moſt of Chriſt in them. The moſt ſincere Chriſtians, and the moſt growing Chriſtians, and the moſt upright Chriſtians, theſe are the perſons that he moſt loves and values, and delights in; and as to all Ordinances, he values them not but as he meets with Jeſus Chriſt in them; if he finds not Chriſt in an Ordinance, he counts the Ordinance as no Ordinance: And if a Lord's Day doth paſs without ſome communion with Chriſt, he counts 'tis no day to his Soul. And the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus that he prizes ſo much, it is becauſe it is Chriſt's Goſpel, and the Truths of the Goſpel, that are ſo dear to to him, that he can venture all for, it is becauſe they are Chriſt's Truths. Now Chriſtians, examine your ſtate and condition by this alſo; what is it that you value your ſelves by? Do you value your ſelves by your bare profeſſions? Do you value your ſelves by your enlargement? Do you value your ſelves by your gifts? Do you value your ſelves by the name that you have amongſt men? Thoſe that are in Chriſt do not value themſelves thus, but by what they apprehend themſelves to be in, and to have received from Chriſt Jeſus.

Thirteenthly, Again; *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, riſes and falls in its ſpirit, according unto the ſenſible manifeſtations or withdrawings of Chriſt in his heart*; he rejoyces as Chriſt doth appear, and he is ſaddened as Chriſt doth withdraw, and his joy is coming and going as Chriſt is coming and going in his heart; an appearance of Chriſt makes

day

day in his heart, and the withdrawings of Chriſt makes night in his Soul: When there is a Curtain drawn between Chriſt and him, then he is in the dark, and then his Soul ſits in ſorrow; then he is covered over with mourning; but upon the return of Chriſt his Soul leaps within him, and he is filled and ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, *Iſa.*61.10. *I will rejoyce in the Lord; my Soul ſhall be joyful in my God.* Why ſo? becauſe Chriſt doth appear, and puts on ſomething of his own clothing, and giveth out ſomething of himſelf to me; he comes as a Bridegroom decketh himſelf with Ornaments, and makes me as his Bride, and decks me with his Jewels. Now this doth cauſe me to rejoyce in the Lord, and makes me joyful in my God. Days of communion, and ſeaſons of manifeſtation, they are the feſtival days that his Soul enjoys, and nothing cauſes ſo great a damp upon his heart, as when Chriſt draws off. This was ſeen in *David*, he riſes and falls in his ſpirit, as were the manifeſtations or the withdrawings of Chriſt there. *Lord*, ſays he, *thy loving kindneſs is better than life*; Ay, there was his joy and gladneſs. And *Lord*, ſays he at another time, *thou didſt but hide thy face, and I was troubled*; there was his ſorrow for Chriſt's abſence. And, ſays the Spouſe, *Cant.* 1. 2. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth.* By [*kiſs*] here, is meant ſome viſible manifeſtation of Chriſt unto his Soul, ſome diſcernable token of his love; *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth* [*for thy love* (ſaies he) *is better than Wine.*] [*Wine*] you know was to be given to thoſe that were of a heavy heart by *Solomons* direction, *Proverbs* 31. 6. and *Pſal.* 104. 15. *Wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and Oil to make*

his

his face to ſhine. So as Wine, it is to be given to thoſe that are of a heavy heart, it is that which is to make joyful, and to exhilarate the Spirits. Now ſaies *David*, Lord thy love is better then Wine, there is more in a little communication of Chriſt Jeſus, then in the greateſt refreſhment, and heart chearing in the world, for this love that is better then Wine, is not love ſimply conſidered, but the effects of love in gracicious manifeſtations, as *John* 14. 21, 22. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him*; and ſaies *Judas*, not *Iſcariot*, *Lord how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not unto the world?* This love was a love of manifeſtation; now ſaies he, *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth.* Let love be manifeſted, and this manifeſting love is better than Wine: O it will make all other things dainties to him, and ſweets to be bitter in his Spirit; this is ſweet indeed, and an abiding ground of joy and comfort to his Soul upon the evidence of his love, and upon the ſight of his face, and communion with him. Now Chriſtians, examine your hearts by this, if that your joy be determined upon ſomething elſe then upon Chriſt, and if that the withdrawments of Chriſt don't cauſe the greateſt ſadneſs unto your Spirits, it is a ſhroud ſign that you have no intereſt in Chriſt: But now where Chriſt Jeſus is lookt upon as the very joy of your Souls, and you moſt of all joy in his preſence, and you are moſt of all troubled at his de-

departure, and at the hidings of his face; it is a ſign of intereſt. O it is a ſign that that Woman doth intirely love her Husband, that cannot bear that he ſhould be long abſent from her, and is moſt of all pleaſed in his company; ſo it is a ſign that that Soul is married unto Chriſt Jeſus, that cannot bear the withdrawments of Chriſt, and that is never ſo much troubled and toſſed, and diſcomforted and afflicted in his Spirit, as when Jeſus Chriſt ſtands behind the Curtain, and refuſeth to make anſwer to his Soul; when he is crying after him.

SERMON VIII.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation.

WE propoſed to give you ſome notes of evidence, whereby you may come to know that this Jeſus is your Jeſus, and that you are intereſted in him. We have already gone through 13 particulars, and ſhall now proceed.

Fourteenthly, *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt hath conſtraining, abiding endearments in his heart unto Jeſus Chriſt, ſo as no diſcouragement ſhall turn him off from Chriſt, but he will cut the*

way through all oppoſition to come to the enjoyment of him.

My Friends if you are really intereſted in Chriſt, and have (upon an intereſt) taſted how gracious the Lord is, difficulties in your way to Chriſt will be no difficulties ſo you may enjoy him; the Soul in Chriſt will be contented to be reproached for Chriſt, ſo he may enjoy him, and the reproaches that he meets withal in the way of Chriſt, will be no great matter to him, ſo Chriſt and he may keep together. You may ſee what was the Spirit of an old Teſtament Saint, in *Heb.* 11. 24, 25. *By Faith* Moſes *when he was come to years, refuſed to be called the Son of* Pharaohs *Daughter, chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the People of God, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.* v. 26. *Eſteeming the reproaches of Chriſt greater riches then the Treaſures of* Egypt. Perſecutions won't part Chriſt, and the real ſincere Chriſtian, but though he ſhall be perſecuted for Chriſt, yet if Chriſt and he can but keep cloſe together, he will think all is well, *Rom.* 8. 35. and ſo on, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall Tribulation, or Diſtreſs, or Perſecution, or Famine, or Nakedneſs, or Peril, or Sword,* &c. Why, ſaies he, we can bear all this for Chriſt; we can bear tribulation, we can bear diſtreſs, we can bear perſecution, famine, nakedneſs, peril, ſword; Lord, any thing rather than to loſe Chriſt, ſaies the ſincere intereſted Chriſtian, he Will ſuffer loſſes for Chriſt, rather than to loſe Chriſt. *Lord* (ſay the Diſciples) *We have left all for thy ſake*; and it is ſaid of the primitive Chriſtians, that *they took*

joy-

joyfully the ſpoyling of their goods; let men frown, and let Devils frown ſtill, the heart of the ſincere intereſted Chriſtian will be working Chriſt-ward, & he will have conſtraining, abiding endearments in his heart, that will cut through the difficulties of his way, he will be willing to loſe any thing rather than to loſe Chriſt; this is the frame of a Soul intereſted in Chriſt, when he is under deliberate actings for Chriſt. I am ſenſible that an honeſt heart by the ſtrength of a temptation may be ſuddenly ſurprized as *Peter* was; ay, but it will be but for a moment, and he will riſe again, he won't quit his intereſt in Chriſt, he won't ſell his part in Chriſt, when he comes to reflect and conſider, Chriſt and he cannot live aſunder: and his intereſt in Chriſt will have ſuch an influence upon his Soul, as will cauſe him to abide in Chriſt, that whatſoever he meets withal, yet he deſires above all to enjoy Chriſt; and will go through fire, and through water, if that be the way, and the only way that in the circumſtances of providence in divine over-rules, Chriſt is to be enjoyed, *Phil.* 1. 29. I pray mark the connexion there, *It is given to you to believe, and alſo to ſuffer*; upon the Souls *believing* is his intereſt ſtruck up with Chriſt, and he is oned with Chriſt. Now ſaies he, thoſe that *believe*, that is, thoſe that are intereſted in Chriſt, they *will alſo ſuffer for the ſake of Chriſt*, and the ſame power that helps them to believe, doth alſo bear them up againſt the frowns, and againſt the diſcouragements that they meet withal in the way of Chriſt. Well Chriſtians, examine your own ſtate by this particular; how ſtand

your hearts affected and endeared to Christ in a day of ſuffering, when difficulties look you in the face, reproaches they are like to befal you, loſſes and breakings in your outward condition are like to come upon you? Can your hearts ſay whatſoever comes, O let us have Chriſt, Chriſt is more than all; and what we ſhall enjoy in Chriſt is more then we can loſe for him; there is a conſtraining, abiding endearment in the heart that is really united to Chriſt that will cut the way through all oppoſition. It is not thus with one that is not intereſted in Chriſt. The young man in the Goſpel made a very fair profeſſion of Chriſt, and comes and pretends to be his moſt forward Diſciple, but ſaies Chriſt to him, can you live upon me alone? and can you ſuffer any thing for the enjoyment of me? And will you value and prefer a naked intereſt in me before all your poſſeſſions? No, Lord, ſaies he, I have great poſſeſſions; What, muſt I forgo all theſe in hand to live upon I know not what? and I know not who? and ſo he takes his leave of Chriſt. And ſaies the Apoſtle, *Demas hath forſaken me, having imbraced this preſent world:* Their comforts, and their enjoyments, and their outward poſſeſſions, and their outward peace will be more to them then all that they ever thought of Chriſt, that are not really intereſted in him; but now that Soul that hath made its cloſe with Chriſt, his heart is ſo engaged, and he hath taſted ſo much ſweetneſs in Chriſt Jeſus; as whatever it coſt him, Chriſt and he ſhall never part; though he be ſtript naked for Chriſt, yet he will have Chriſt,

and

and though he die for Chriſt, yet he won't give up his intereſt in him. Now examine your Souls by the ſtrong endearments of your hearts unto Chriſt, when there is an oppreſſing intereſt that ſeems to come between you and Chriſt, do your affections then divide; and do you then deliver up Chriſt, and quit your part in Chriſt? By a cloſe examination of your hearts, under this head you may come to ſome knowledge of your preſent ſtate as to your intereſt.

Fifteenthly, Again in the laſt place, *The Soul that is intereſted in Chriſt, prefers the glory of Chriſts intereſt before his own private advantage*; if you be indeed joyned unto the Lord, then the intereſt of Chriſts glory is a ſwaying intereſt in your hearts, it is a ruling, captivating intereſt, that doth bind and engage you to the glory of it, that the Soul will prefer Chriſts glory before any thing of his own, his life will be under a peculiar dedication to advance and promote the glory of Chriſt Jeſus; and he will be alwaies upon an advancing deſign, to exalt Chriſt in his heart, and to exalt Chriſt in his houſe, and to exalt Chriſt where he hath to do, and with whom he hath to do: he will exalt Chriſt, though it be upon his own name, and upon his own intereſt, he will deny his own name for Chriſt, and will believe for the advancing of the glory of the intereſt of the Lord Jeſus, *Phil.* 1. 20, 21. *To me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain.* The Apoſtle he ſums up all in this, Chriſt is my all; *if I live*, I deſire not to live to my ſelf, but to Chriſt, and *if I die*, I deſire to die to Chriſt, that Chriſts intereſt, and the

glory of his intereſt may be exalted by me, both while I live, and when I die. Now Chriſtians examine your ſelves by this, what ſway doth the glory of Chriſt bear in your hearts? If that you cannot deny your ſelves for Chriſt, if that your own names be more to you then Chriſts name, and if that your own honour be more to you then Chriſts honour, and your own intereſt be more to you then Chriſts intereſt, it is a very ill ſign that things are not right in your hearts: but if the intereſt of Chriſt be the ruling, ſwaying intereſt, that you are all upon the advance of the glory of Chriſt, whatever become of your ſelves, and whatever become of your intereſt, and whatever you ſuffer in the way; yet O that Chriſt might be magnified, and O that Chriſt might be glorified; Chriſts glory is uppermoſt in your hearts, and is the only intereſt that you would prefer; it is a ſign that you are indeed intereſted in Chriſt, otherwiſe your hearts would never be ſo much concerned about Chriſts intereſt, and about the glory of his intereſt.

And a little further to help and direct you; do but conſider theſe few things.

Firſt, In ſearching your own hearts for an evidence of intereſt; *If you can find theſe things that we have laid down, in truth, though not in high degrees and meaſures, you may be comforted.* Many Perſons they wrong their caſe, and ſo darken themſelves thereupon, by looking more unto the height of thoſe things, that are notes of evidence, then the truth of them. Now examine your ſelves I ſay by the truth of theſe things;

things; though you cannot yet find that you have overcome temptation, that you have got into an holy triumph over temptation, yet if that you can find that under all contrary inclinations and drawings, the habitual frame and inclination of your heart is ſecured for Chriſt, you may be comforted; though you cannot find that you are able to do much towards the repairing of the glory of Chriſt in your place, yet if you have a heart that is deeply affected with the diſhonour that is done to Chriſt, becauſe Chriſt is diſhonoured thereby, you may be comforted. Though Chriſtians you can find in your ſearches but very little of Chriſt in your hearts, yet if your Souls are reſtleſly carried out after Chriſt, in all your ſeekings of him, that you muſt compaſs ſomething of Chriſt, or you cannot be ſatisfied; this ſeeking heart and reſtleſs Spirit after Chriſt is a note of evidence to you; and though you cannot live up to Chriſt as you would, yet if your preparations and reformations be heart-preparations, and heart-reformations, that the work is begun, and going on in you, this may be matter of comfort to you; and ſo you may go on to all the other particulars that I have given you; look more to the truth of them then to the height and degree of them, if you would upon them come to a right underſtanding of your preſent ſtate.

Secondly, *If upon a ſearch you can find but ſome of thoſe things that have been given you as evidential of an intereſt, you may be comforted, though for the preſent you cannot ſpeak of them all upon a particular experimental ſenſe*: The Lord

he ſpeaks unto one Soul by one word, and he ſpeaks unto another Soul by another word, and we don't know what particular word the Lord will make uſe of, nor what particular of all theſe the Lord hath ſingled out, and made of uſe, advantage, and comfort unto any of you, but if the Spirit of the Lord hath ſingled out any one of them, and given you a hint of intereſt thereupon, you have cauſe to rejoice in the Lord; and if the Lord hath given you but the leaſt hint of his love, and the leaſt intimation by any word of Grace, of your intereſt, let not this be lookt upon as a ſmall thing. Take heed of refuſing the conſolations of the Lord when they are offered to you, remember him of whom it is ſaid, *Pſal.*77.2. *My Soul refuſed to be comforted.*

Thirdly, *Know this, that full aſſurance, and clear evidence of intereſt is gradually brought into the heart*; as the light of Grace comes in gradually, ſo alſo does the light of comfort, which is a light unto your Souls to diſcern Chriſt, and to take comfort in him, now the Lord it may be at firſt let in a little light, as it were through the cravis; don't ſet light by this; thus doth the Lord work, he gives in a little light at one time, that doth as it were put the Soul between hope and fear, and by and by he comes in with a little more light, and then with a little more light, and ſo gradually he carries on the Soul until he hath led him unto a clear evidence, and given him a full aſſurance of intereſt; ſo as, if you have but yet the day ſtar in your hearts, don't deſpiſe it, if you have yet but the beginnings of the light of conſolation, don't judge

this

this ſmall: though comparatively to what ſome do enjoy, it is but ſmall, yet let it not be ſmall in your apprehenſions; but know that the light of intereſt gradually comes in & encreaſes. I may liken the light of intereſt unto the Prophets Cloud, that was at firſt but like a mans hand, and it was a great way off, there was ſome hope of rain upon it, but they did not know what would come of it, but this was the beginning of ſuch a Cloud that brought abundance of rain. So thou haſt (Chriſtian) a little light that is glimmering in thy heart, that ſets thee it may be between hope and fear; well, let not this be ſmall to thee, for though for the preſent thou canſt not come to a full aſſurance, yet thou doſt not know what this will come to; thou doeſt not know what a growing light this is, and how much it may encreaſe in thy heart.

Now unto thoſe that have as yet but a little light in their Souls, ſome ſmall hopes through grace, of an intereſt, but they dare not poſitively conclude, nor they dare not abſolutely deny; they have not that full aſſurance that ſome have, neither are they left wholly in the dark; unto theſe Souls I would ſpeak ſomething by way of encouragement, and ſomething by way of direction.

Firſt, *By way of encouragement* to thoſe that have a little hope through grace, and have ſome ſmall glimmerings of their intereſt, and ſome buddings of their evidence, though it is not yet fully blown; let ſuch hearts conſider,

Firſt, That if thou haſt any thing that is a note of evidence, or gives thee hope through grace, any thing I mean that is in truth, know, *that though it be never ſo ſmall, yet thy intereſt in Chriſt is as great as his is, that dwells in the height of aſſurance*: my friends,

friends, your intereſt in Chriſt is not the leſs, becauſe your evidence of intereſt is very ſmall, but your little evidence that is in truth, or this little word of grace that the Spirit hath ſpoken, that gives you ſome hopes about your condition, doth give you as full an intereſt in Chriſt, as he hath, that hath the higheſt meaſures of aſſurance in this world. The young Child that can but run to his Father, and cry Father, Father, he hath as full an intereſt in, and relation to his Father, as the grown Child that in underſtanding and judgment is able to reflect upon, and improve the relation; and ſo it is with thy Soul in thy union with Chriſt, though thou canſt but look up unto the Lord, and cry unto him that he would help thee; though thou canſt but juſt cry Father, though thou art not able to improve thy intereſt as ſome others can, yet if upon the leaſt hint of grace from the Spirit thou art able to cry Father, thy intereſt is as good, and as great as that Souls that is able to rejoyce in Chriſt in full evidence; Chriſt is yours, and you are Sons, you are heirs as well as others, and you have the ſame Spirit, and the ſame Fountain of Grace to go to, under the ſmallneſs of the evidence of your intereſt.

Secondly, *You are under the ſame preſervable, maintainable care that thoſe are, that dwell upon the top of aſſurance*: JeſusChriſt doth not take the leſs care of you, becauſe your intereſt is very dark and cloudy for the preſent, but his care over you is the ſame; he is alwaies opening his watchful eye upon you; and he is alwaies doing for you, alwaies defending of you; ſee what he ſaies,

ſaies, *Iſaiah* 40. 11. *He ſhall feed his flock like a Shepherd, he ſhall gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſom, and gently lead thoſe that are with young.* O alaſs, they are ſcarce ble to believe that they are *Lambs* in the flock of Chriſt, they would hope ſo, and they dare not wholly deny it, but that Chriſt hath a part in them, and hold of them, but it is all they can do to ſay ſo; but be it ſo, they are under as much care as any; *He will carry them in his arms, he will gently lead thoſe that are with young*: Chriſt Jeſus in one ſingle act doth equally reſpect all thoſe that are intereſted in him; be their evidence of intereſt more or leſs, clearer, or more clouded.

Thirdly, Again; *The comprehenſions of Chriſt upon the union are not proportioned unto, but do far exceed our apprehenſions of him in the union*: Chriſt doth not ſay, I will be unto you as you are unto me, and as you do, ſo will I do, and as you be, ſo will I be, and according to your apprehenſions, ſo will I be unto you; but he does exceeding abundantly for us above our faith, and above our hope; it may be we can but ſay unto him, *Lord help*; and though we are ſo weak, he will not do the leſs; but he will proſecute and manage the intereſt on his part upon your Souls, though your apprehenſions may be very ſmall of him; you have a very full ſatisfying Scripture for this, *Eph.* 3. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we are able to ask or think, according to the power that worketh in him*: So that Jeſus Chriſts actings towards us, and dealings with us, and compre-

hen-

hendings of us are not proportioned to our apprehenſions of him, not according to our faith and hope, and not according to our prayer, but ſaies he, *he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask or think, and that according to the power that worketh in him*: So that though you cannot at all times make faith of that power, yet that power is working, and though your apprehenſions be very ſmall, yet the comprehenſions of Chriſt are very great; it is in Heaven that we ſhall know as we are known; we are fully known here, but our ſelves know but in part.

Fourthly. *The weakneſſes diſcovered upon your intereſt, and the provocations given, will be covered and forgiven by the Lord Jeſus in the ſtrength of the love of his relation to you, or intereſt in you.* The Soul that is in relation, is not able in a clear Goſpel way to live up unto his ſtanding in Chriſt Jeſus, but he oft-times walks very diſhonourably unto his intereſt, and very unbecomingly to his hopes of evidence; well Soul, though it be thus, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will diſplay ſuch love on his part, as ſhall cover and forgive all; the Father will not diſinherit his Child, becauſe he doth provoke him, and becauſe he doth grieve him by many fooliſh and unchildlike acts, but the love of the relation, on the Fathers part will forgive the Child. The Husband won't give a bill of divorce to his Wife, becauſe he finds failings in her waies, but the love of the relation doth bind him, and influence him to cover all her weakneſſes, and continue his kindneſs to her; if we have a mem-

ber

ber that is full of pain, and puts us to a great deal of ſmart and puts us much out of order, we do not preſently call for the cutting off of this member, but we bear with the pain and ſmart, remembering that it is a member: now thus it is my friends, between the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and you, though there are weakneſſes diſcovered in your waies, yet he will remember that you are intereſted in him, and though he meet with provocations from you, yet he will remember that you are his Children, and that you are in relation, and that will engage him to cover and forgive all; though I ſpeak not this to give any a liberty to indulge themſelves, and I hope none of you will abuſe diſcoveries of grace ſo, I am ſure an honeſt heart will not, but for your terrour, if your temptation be thereunto, know, that though Jeſus Chriſt will not proceed in the utmoſt of his diſpleaſure againſt you to give you a bill of divorce, yet there are rebukes, and there are frowns that are as bitter as death, that the Soul may meet withal from Chriſt upon his high provocations; though we don't preſently cut off a member that is full of pain, yet we may ſee cauſe to ſend for the Surgeon, to make an inciſion, and ſo verily will Jeſus Chriſt be forced to do in your hearts, that give your ſelves ſuch an allowance, *Pſal.* 89. 31, 32, 33. *If his Children forſake my laws, and walk not in my judgments, if they break my ſtatutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I viſit their tranſgreſſions with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes; nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail,* &c.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Know that your intereſt in Chriſt is not diſſolvible as the evidence of your intereſt is looſable.* Chriſtian, it may be the Lord hath ſingled out ſome word that he hath made uſe of by his Spirit to give you ſome hopes in, and about your intereſt in, and relation unto Chriſt; I would hope that all hath not been ſpoken to you in vain, but if the Lord hath given you ſome hint by his word of your intereſt, poſſibly within a little while all this will be loſt again, and thou maiſt be as much in the dark, as ever thou wert ſince thou cameſt into Chriſt; well, Chriſt will not diſown thee, and Chriſt will hold thee up, that thou ſhalt never be left to diſown him; ſtill thy intereſt is ſure in Chriſt Jeſus; though light is coming and going in thy Soul, and thy evidence is ſometimes coming, and ſometimes going, yet know that thy intereſt is firm and inviolable.

Sixthly, *Thy preſent intereſt in, and relation unto Chriſt in a ſtate of Grace, is a certain and infallible pledge of thy future poſſeſſion of Chriſt in glory*: Chriſtian, thou haſt now a little hope through grace; O make much of it, thou doſt not know what is in it: There is not only matter of conſolation in it, but it contains a pledge of Heaven, and of thy full poſſeſſion of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in glory for ever, therefore ſaith Chriſt; *He that believeth on me hath everlaſting life*, believing that gives the intereſt, thereby the Soul is united to Chriſt; now upon the union he *hath everlaſting life*, he hath the pledge of it, his union is the pledge of it; and

he

he is reſerved for eternal life, and he is going on to perfection, to enjoy eternal life. The Lord is in grace and by grace fitting of him for a glorious enjoyment of himſelf for ever; now theſe things are for thy comfort in thy preſent condition, whileſt the light of evidence is but glimmering in thy heart.

Secondly, Some few things briefly I ſhall give you by way of direction.

Firſt, *Have you the leaſt intimation of the Lords love to you, and of your ſtanding in his love, be thankful for theſe ſmall appearances of light in your Souls.* I ſay be thankful Chriſtians; there is a great deal in a little and ſmall word of *evidence*, or in a ſmall word of *hope*. Therefore take every hint that the Lord gives, and wear it with thankfulneſs, bleſs his name for it, that is the way to have it encreaſed.

Secondly, *Joy and triumph in the Lord, upon the preſent evidence that you have, living up to it.* I ſay live up to the light that you have, in a holy joy and rejoycing in Chriſt Jeſus, get into the Prophets Spirit, and into his frame here in the text; *To joy in the Lord, and to rejoice in the God of your Salvation*, and learn Chriſtian to live up unto a ſmall meaſure of aſſurance, and that is the way to have a greater.

Thirdly, *Acknowledge all ſenſe of intereſt to be given forth in a way of grace*; I ſay acknowledge, that not only the grace of your union, but alſo the light and comfort of your union is diſpenſed in a way of free grace; The Lord is pleaſed to give out all manifeſtations of intereſt in Chriſt in a way of grace, *John* 14. 22. Judas *ſaith unto him*,

him, not Iſcariot, *Lord, how is it that thou manifeſteſt thy ſelf unto us, and not unto the world?* He muſt ſpeak this upon a reflect act, or elſe he could not ſpeak with that confidence; Lord, that thou haſt manifeſted thy ſelf to us, and not to others, this is to be acknowledged unto free grace.

Fourthly, *Have you a little light of your Intereſt? do you gather in upon Chriſt from that little that you have for more?* Chriſtians, though you have but a little light for the preſent, and are weak in aſſurance for the preſent, yet there is a full meaſure of aſſurance to be given out: There is not only the Soul's comfort from a reflect act, by the light of the Lord upon his own grace that is wrought, but there is the immediate Teſtimony of the Spirit that is ready to be given out, which is a Witneſs not argumentative, or in a way of argumentation, but it is a Witneſs and Evidence that is given in by, and in the immediateneſs of his own preſence in the heart of the Believer, *Rom.* 8. 16. *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God:* He bears witneſs in ſome immediate act in the Soul. It is a clear undeniable, ſoul-ſatisfying, Divine Teſtimony, that the Spirit gives in the Soul, that reſolves all its doubts, and clears his whole Intereſt, and ſettles him in the full enjoyment of the Lord Jeſus, and enables him to act upon it. And then

Fifthly and laſtly, *Have you a little evidence of your Intereſt for the preſent? Chriſtian, do you improve this little unto the comforting of your Souls in Chriſt in all ſtraits, and unto a living upon him in all the neceſſities of your preſent condition?* Jeſus is yours, and you are intereſted in him; the Lord hath given you ſome little hope of this; this hope through

grace

grace Chriſtians, ſhould be improved by you; upon all occaſions you ſhould run out unto the Lord Jeſus, and have recourſe to him, and venture upon him; you ſhould glory in him, and live upon his fulneſs, and rely upon his power and faithfulneſs: Jeſus that is ſo full is your Jeſus; and Jeſus that is ſo free is your Jeſus; and Jeſus that is ſo faithful is your Jeſus; you have ſome ſight of this, and ſome hope of this through grace; the Lord now expects that you ſhould come and live upon him in all conditions, and comfort your Souls in him in all diſconſolations, when you are weak, and when you are tempted, and when you are tryed, and when you meet with diſcouragements from without, then to retire to the Lord Jeſus, and act Faith upon him.

SERMON IX.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

I Shall now proceed to help and direct thoſe Souls that are able to reflect upon their own Intereſt and ſtanding in Chriſt, that they may live upon Chriſt, and glory in him in all conditions, and under all changes of Providence, that though they have none elſe, though they have nothing elſe in this world but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to live upon,

their hearts may be full of joy and comfort. And before I come particularly to ſpeak unto this, I ſhall premiſe and propoſe ſeveral conſiderations that may help to clear the way to what we deſign to ſpeak to, and to encourage your hearts unto a living upon, and glorying in Chriſt, when you have nothing elſe to rejoyce in.

Firſt, *Conſider that all the comforts of an outward condition are held at great uncertainties, and continued at the ſoveraign pleaſure of the great diſpoſer of Heaven.* The Lord hath not fixt us unchangeably in the enjoyments and comforts of an outward ſtate, but he reſerves a ſoveraign power in his own hand to remand from us what at a time he was pleaſed to command down upon us. And all the comforts of an outward condition they are mutable, and we are expoſed unto a variety of changes of condition in this world. All our outward comforts they are expoſable unto the ſpoil; and the very foundation of our Joy in this world is avertable: He that hath to his own apprehenſion a mountain that ſtands ſtrong, that he thinks can never be moved, is expoſed to the ſoveraign alterations of the great Ruler of Heaven, that he may have his mountain overturned in a moment; and he that is lifted up on high, and ſeems to himſelf to be ſo upon the advance, that he ſhall never fall: The Lord can ſuddenly like unto *Job*, lay him in the duſt. We are full one day, and the Lord may empty us before the next; we are rich to day, and we may be poor before to morrow; we are comforted to day on every ſide, and we may be left naked, deſtitute and broken before to morrow: As to our Stocks, they are loſable and ſpendable; and as to all Lands and Inheri-

Inheritances, they are ſaleable and morgageable; uncertain riches, they make to themſelves wings and flee away; they have the wings of fire, or the wings of Thieves, or the wings of this providence, and the other to flee away with. The Lord he ſuffers one man to run away with ſo much of ſuch a man's eſtate, and ſuffers a nother to run away with another part of his eſtate, that thoſe that were rich are ſoon made poor; and as to your relations that you at preſent take comfort in; now they are, and anon they are not, Parents, Children, Friends, Comforters, Counſellors, they die away from us, and we ſee them, and we know them no more for ever; and which of you that are here in the Lord's preſence, that may not ſit down & weep over your broken pitchers, and ſay, This once I had, and that once I had, but now I have it not; once I was full, but now I am empty; once I was lifted up on high, but now I am brought down very low; once I was a lender, but now I am a borrower; once I had moſt comfortable relations, none happier than I, in a tender Father, in a loving Yoke-fellow, in a deſirable Child, in a faithful Friend; but now it is quite otherwiſe, they are all like *Jonah*'s Gourd that grew up and withered on a ſudden. This you may ſee in the verſe before the Text; the Figg tree that bloſſoms not, the fruit of the Vine, and the labour of the Olive they fail, and the Fields yield no meat; the Flocks are cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the ſtall. The Lord you ſee hath given us but a weak tenure to all theſe outward enjoyments, and he maintains a Soveraignty over every comfort that he is pleaſed to beſtow upon us, that ſo we ſhall hold all that we have in this world at great

uncertainties, and muſt day by day ſtand to the allowance of the great diſpoſer of Heaven, who will ſometimes give, and will ſometimes take what he hath given.

Secondly, *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is, and hath whatſoever the Scripture hath ſaid, and much more than we are able to conceive of him, in our largeſt and utmoſt apprehenſions.* He is, and he hath, according unto all Old Teſtament Prophecies and Predictions in the utmoſt Expoſition that can be made of them, in the largeſt extent, and he is, and he hath according to the utmoſt word of the revelation that is made of him in the New Teſtament; and you are not able to conceive and apprehend what he is, and what he hath in the conſidering of the Scripture expreſſions that are made uſe of to ſet him forth unto you. You cannot meaſure Chriſt by your thoughts and imaginations; but when you have conceived all that you can, Chriſt is more, and Chriſt hath more than you are able to apprehend of him. The Scripture tells us, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath *a fulneſs of grace* in him; now you are not able to apprehend what this fulneſs of grace is; it is an infinite fulneſs, and you are not able to comprehend it in your finite thoughts, how comprehenſive ſoever they are. The Goſpel tells you *of the outgoings of Chriſt's heart unto ſinners*, but you are not able to apprehend, nor to meaſure what is the love of the heart of Chriſt to poor ſinners; but when you have conceived never ſo much of his love, there is more ſtill than you are able to grapple. The Scripture tells you of *a great power* that is in Chriſt; conceive never ſo much of his power, what it is that he is able to do for you, in a ſtrait, and how wonderfully he is able to work,

there

there is yet a greater extent in the power of Chriſt than your apprehenſions can reach. The Goſpel tells you of an *All-fulneſs, or an Allneſs* that is in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Sum up all that you can think of, and all that the Scripture can help you to conceive of, to add unto this Allneſs of Chriſt, and yet behold you are not able to tell what his All is; you may ſoon tell what your All is, or you may tell what anothers All is, what a great man's All is, or what a Prince's All is, or what a Kingdom's All is, but you cannot tell what Chriſt's All is; but when you have thought and conceived, when you have dived and reached until you are weary, ſtill the grace, the power, the love, the fulneſs of the Lord Jeſus is above your reach, and there is more than ever entered into your hearts to conceive of him. This you have, *Iſa.* 55. 8 9. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your waies my waies, ſaith the Lord; for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, ſo are my waies higher than your waies, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* See how the Lord tells us that he is advanced above all our imaginations of him. Now the thoughts of Chriſt's heart are alwaies towards us, and alwaies proportioned unto the fulneſs that he hath received: Now, ſays he, My thoughts are not like to your thoughts; you thought that I could relieve only in ſuch a caſe, or I could help only in ſuch a ſtrait; you thought I could do thus, and that I could do thus, and do no more; but alas, ſays Chriſt, you are miſtaken; there is as great a diſtance between my thoughts and your thoughts, as there is between Heaven and Earth; ſo as the fulneſs of Chriſt Jeſus is a moſt glorious and bleſſed fulneſs, enough for all your Soul's relief, and to ſpare.

Thirdly, *Christ's fulneſs of grace is alwaies ſubjectively and objectively the ſame.*

Firſt, *It is alwaies ſubjectively the ſame.* Chriſt's Spring is not a riſing and a falling Spring, but the waters of it are alwaies of the ſame depth; the waters of this Fountain do not admit of an ebb and of a flow, but they are alwaies at one and the ſame height. Chriſt hath not a more and a leſs; his fulneſs will not admit of an augmentation and a diminution; but notwithſtanding all the overflowings of the fountain, ſtill it is a fountain-fulneſs; notwithſtanding all the ſtreams that have run from it, ſtill it is as full as ever; notwithſtanding all the thouſands of Souls that Jeſus hath relieved, and empty hearts that Jeſus hath filled, ſtill he is as full of grace as ever, as full of mercy as ever: There is no leſs in this fountain as it is ſubjectively conſidered, upon all that he hath given and diſpenſed; but he is as rich in grace, and there is as great a plenty in him, as there was when he firſt opened his fountain unto ſinners, *Col.* 1. 19. *For it hath pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell*: There it doth alwaies abide, and the ſame fulneſs without change, the ſame fulneſs without diminution. That fulneſs that God placed in his Son, there it doth abide in the glory of its utmoſt height, *Heb.* 13. 8. *Jeſus is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever.* This is that that is ſaid of your Jeſus, his fulneſs was a great fulneſs at firſt; why, he is the ſame to day; ſpend Chriſtians what you will, and draw out of the fountain what you can, it will be as full to morrow as it is to day; *Yeſterday, to day, and the ſame for ever.*

Secondly, *Chriſts fulneſs is alwaies objectively the ſame unto all thoſe that do poſſeſs it*; the Soul that

that hath an intereſt in Jeſus once, hath an intereſt in him for ever: and the Soul that is once admitted unto the fountain of Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall never be debarr'd more; you have not a coming and a going intereſt, an intereſt that is to day, and may be taken away to morrow; indeed your outward comforts they are loſable comforts, and your outward bleſſings are ſpendable, God may give you much to day, and you may have nothing of all that much to morrow; but it is not ſo here, you are not intereſted in Chriſt to day, and diſ-intereſted in him to morrow; but once intereſted, and for ever intereſted; not gracious now, and graceleſs by and by, but your intereſt in the grace of Chriſt is an everlaſting intereſt; and you have the immutable fulneſs of the Lord Jeſus ever to go unto, whatever your ſtrait is, having once an intereſt given you in him; the Lord doth not give you a part in himſelf, and then take away that part, but Chriſt once yours, is for ever yours, and your fountain fulneſs none ſhall ever be able to take from you, nor to deprive you of, ſo as if thou haſt once Chriſt to go unto, thou haſt alwaies Chriſt to go unto; and if thou doeſt once diſcern thy intereſt in Chriſt upon good and Goſpel ſubſtantial grounds, thou mayeſt alwaies glory in the Lord, that thou art once intereſted in.

Fourthly, *All Saints have the ſame Jeſus to live upon, and the ſame fulneſs of Jeſus in all its dimenſions to go unto*: The Lord hath not given one believer a greater propriety in himſelf then he hath given another; neither hath one a fuller way prepared for him of going unto Chriſt

than another hath; the ſame Jeſus that *Abraham* had to do with, and did live upon, is in common for every Son and Daughter of *Abraham*; and the ſame fulneſs of Jeſus that *Abraham* had, you have in all its dimenſions; the Lord did not open a Fountain unto *Abraham*, and open only a ſtream unto you, but if you be a Son or Daughter of *Abraham*, you have the ſame great Ocean to go unto in all its fulneſs that *Abraham* had, you have the ſame merits to implead that *Abraham* had; you have the ſame blood to be waſhed in, and to waſh in, that any other believer hath; and you have the ſame great and precious promiſes to apply that another believer hath; one believer cannot lay a challenge upon this promiſe, and ſay it is mine, and not yours; but 'tis yours as well as his, the ſame Fountain in all its dimenſions you have to go unto in all your ſtreights, that another believer hath; and therefore if you have not that ſtrength, if you have not that grace, if you have not that riches, if you have not that fulneſs that another believer hath, you muſt blame your ſelves and not Chriſt, for he offers himſelf alike unto all, and diſcovers and holds forth his Fountain alike unto all.

Fifthly, *There is a vaſt diſproportion between your creature loſſes, and your gains and enjoyments in Chriſt*; your loſſes in the creature they are but ſhadows, and not ſubſtance; there is an emptineſs in the fulleſt outward condition, take it as an outward condition, and there is a bitterneſs in the ſweeteſt outward enjoyment, and the loſſes that you can meet withal in this world, they

are

are only ſuch as reach and concern an animal life; but now there is more in a little of Chriſt Jeſus, then there is in a great deal of the Creature, nay in all creature enjoyments, ſo as whatſoever the loſs is that you meet withal in the creature, a little of Chriſt Jeſus will make it up; the leaſt gift of Chriſts right hand doth far exceed all the gifts of his left hand, and one draught of the water of the upper ſprings is more then all the waters in the nether ſprings, ſo as though thou meeteſt with ſore loſſes, and great blows and breakings in the outward man, yet know that a little of Chriſt will fill up thy Soul, that there will be no want, whatſoever thou haſt loſt: it may be Chriſtian, that the Creature that thou haſt loſt, would have been enjoyed to thy diſadvantage, if it had ſtill been kept in thy hand; it may be it had been to the loſs, to the hurt of the poſſeſſour: but now Jeſus Chriſt is alwaies enjoyed to the advantage, and Chriſt Jeſus is ſuch an advantage as will anſwer all loſing diſadvantages, ſo as Chriſtian, be not overmuch dejected at the paſſing away of the Creature, when there is ſtill enough in Chriſt to make up the loſs that thou haſt ſuſtained.

Sixthly, *The joy that is drawn from Chriſt depends not upon ſenſible things, but lives in the Soul when all outward comforts are gone*: you may as to the world be an undone man, broken in your outward eſtate, and yet your joy none can take from you, but now whatſoever you have in the Creature, if you have not Chriſt with the creature, you have no ground of joy, ſo as Chriſt he is alwaies a ground of joy whether the Creature be abſent or preſent, but the Creature

ture is never ſo without Chriſt; do but conſider the Apoſtle *Paul*, he had an intereſt in Chriſt, and he glories in his intereſt when he had nothing elſe, *Rom.* 5. 3. *We have peace with God*, ſaies he, *through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and *we rejoyce in hope of the glory of God*; and now ſaies he, *we glory in tribulation*; we are ſpoyled in our goods, and we are ſore broken, and left ſorrowful, and deſolate, and forſaken as to outward ſupports, and ſupporters, and yet ſaies he in the midſt of all *we glory in tribulation*; or if you will according unto another Scripture; we are ſaies he, *but as ſorrowful, and but as poor*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. For indeed we make many rich, we have grace, and abundance of grace in Chriſt Jeſus, and we are in no want: *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. 26. *they were in Priſon, and in the Stocks*, and yet behold, *at midnight they break out in ſinging praiſes unto God*; their hearts were full of joy when they had nothing of the Creature in their hands; and thus did the Prophet in the text; there comes a famine upon all his outward comforts, that behold he had nothing to live upon, and *yet will I rejoice in the Lord*; we have all in him, (ſaies he) when we have nothing out of him: Joy that is drawn from Chriſt ſhall abide in the Soul, when all viſible creature ſupports ſhall fail; though his entertainment in the world be very mean, and his outward burthens be very great, and his poverty very preſſing upon his outward man, yet the Soul that hath an intereſt in Chriſt, will joy, notwithſtanding all this.

Seventhly, Again; *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his Goſpel fulneſs of grace is under an indiſpenſible obli-*

obligation to diſpenſe that grace, that as the great officer of Heaven he hath received the charge of: The fulneſs of Chriſt Jeſus, it is a common fulneſs, it is a fulneſs for all believers, and Jeſus Chriſt doth not live and ſpend upon the fulneſs of grace that he hath received; but he diſcovers it to the Saints that they may have it to live upon; and he lieth under indiſpenſible obligations to diſpenſe it to thoſe that come unto him, and Jeſus Chriſt will not debar any Soul that comes unto him for ſpiritual relief; he is engaged in faithfulneſs unto his Father to relieve thoſe that come, and he muſt deny his office, (which he can never do) ſhould he not do it, for the Father hath entruſted him with grace, that he might diſpenſe it, and he hath given him his fulneſsthat he might communicate of his fulneſs to thoſe that are in want, *Pſal.* 68. 18. *Thou haſt aſcended on high, thou haſt led Captivity Captive, thou haſt received gifts for men*; Jeſus Chriſt he hath received great gifts from his Father; he hath received grace gifts & office gifts, and he hath received perſonal gifts, and all theſe gifts that he hath received, theyare for men, and 1 *Cor.* 3. 21. *All is yours, whether* Paul, *or* Apollos, *or* Cephas, *or the world, or things preſent, or things to come, all is yours*; all that Chriſt hath received from his Father, or is ordained to diſpenſe, he muſt diſpenſe, and he will diſpenſe, *Iſaiah* 61, 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the priſon doors to them that*

are

are bound, &c. ſaies Chriſt, there is a poor Soul that I muſt deliver, and there is a wounded heart that I muſt heal, and there is a bruiſed reed that I muſt bind up, and there is one weak in grace that I muſt ſtrengthen, and why muſt I do it? Why ſaies he, *I am anointed to do this*; the Father hath commiſſionated him to do this, he hath ordained him hereunto, and he muſt deny his ordination, and refuſe the office that he is to act in, ſhould he refuſe a poor Soul, and not give liberally to thoſe that come to him, *John* 6.27. *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that meat that endureth to everlaſting life, which the Son of man ſhall give unto you, for him hath God the Father Sealed*; in theſe expreſſions are diſcovered the great bleſſings of the Goſpel that are diſpenſible by the hands of Chriſt; now go unto Chriſt Jeſus, if you be hungry; if you be thirſty go unto Chriſt Jeſus; if you be naked go unto Chriſt Jeſus, if you be empty; why? will he bleſs ſuch an one as I am? will he look upon ſuch an one as I am? yes, ſaies the Father, go, and you ſhall ſpeed, my Son ſhall give theſe things to you, for *I have ſealed him*; or you may conſider theſe words as ſpoken by Chriſt, and as the indiſpenſible obligation that lies upon the Son, from the charge that he hath received, an Office-charge of all that grace that the Father hath deſigned ſhould be diſpenſed; do not queſtion therefore the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but let your applications be frequent to him, he will be faithful unto his Office.

Eightly, *There is an exceeding tenderneſs in the heart of Chriſt unto diſtreſſed Sinners*, according

ing to all the concernments of his Office: There is a very great willingneſs, and forwardneſs in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to be dealing out his grace unto thoſe for whom grace was deſigned, or to whom grace is to be diſpenſed; there is an unexpreſſible deſire in the Soul of Chriſt Jeſus to be dealing out the grace that he hath received the charge of; all Office-work is moſt deſirable work to Chriſt, though never ſo hard, therefore when he ſpeaks concerning his death, ſaies he, *I have a Baptiſm to be Baptized with, and how am I ſtreightned till it be accompliſhed.* But now we may conceive that there is much more a deſire in the heart of Chriſt to diſpenſe the grace of his death, *Pſal.* 16. 3. *Thou art my Lord, my goodneſs extendeth not unto thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight*; My delight ſaies Chriſt, it is with the Saints, to be relieving the Saints, and to be comforting of the Saints, and to be bleſſing and ſtrengthening of the Saints. The heart of Chriſt takes great delight in this, my delight is with them ſaies he, as to all my goodneſs, as to all my kindneſs, as to all the gifts of grace that I have received, and as to all my fountain fulneſs, it doth not extend to the Lord, but it is to the Saints, and my delight is with the Saints, on the conſideration of the grace that I have to diſpenſe to them, and *Heb.* 4. 25. Jeſus Chriſt *he is touched with us, he hath a feeling of our infirmities*, not a feeling in a way of paſſion and ſuffering, but a feeling in a way of compaſſion and tenderneſs, that is his feeling, as the Mother hath a feeling of the pain and ſickneſs, and weak-

neſs

neſs of the Child, through the ſympathy of her ſpirit, and the yernings of her bowels over it; ſo the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſtands with yerning bowels over his Children, and *he is touched with our infirmities*: You have not a weight upon your ſpirit, but in compaſſion and tenderneſs Jeſus Chriſt feels it; and you have not a burthen on this reſpect, or the other, but Jeſus Chriſt feels it; ſuch are the compaſſions of his ſpirit towards you in all the concernments of his Office. It may be you are ready to ſay in a great ſtrait, or under a ſore Trial; O that ſuch a friend knew how it is with me! O that my Father were here! or ſuch a Relation were here! that they did but know how it is with me! Why Soul, Jeſus Chriſt he knows, and he feels the weight of thy troubles, & ſympathiſeth with thee under all thy ſorrows. *We have not an High Prieſt that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities.* Now this tenderneſs of ſpirit, this ſympathy of Chriſt, does influence his hand unto a liberal and free diſcharge of his Office: So that whatever are your loſſes in the creature, and however your outward condition is broken, you may go to the Lord Jeſus, you ſee he is ſuch a one as you may take comfort in.

Ninthly, *Faith is the great inſtrumental means that receives from Chriſt, and that eſtabliſhes the Soul in Chriſt.* All our bleſſings they are lodged in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and there they meet as in a fountain. Now faith that is the drawing grace, that draws out of this fountain for the Soul's ſupply. The Father hath placed all in Chriſt, and faith is the receiving grace, that takes all out of the hand of Jeſus Chriſt that he offers to the Soul; by faith we are united to Chriſt, and by faith we receive from Chriſt

Chriſt upon the union: As the Pipe that is laid unto the mouth of the fountain doth receive and convey water into your houſes, ſo doth faith receive from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and convey into your Souls. Faith is the great Conduit that Jeſus Chriſt doth ſend down his grace in into our hearts. Faith, that deals with Chriſt in all his royalties of grace, and takes life from him,and takes comfort from him,and peace from him, and joy from him, and whatſoever the Soul ſtandeth in need of. Faith is the life-grace, that feeds your Souls, and that keeps you living and thriving, and that makes you ſtrong in the Lord; we are ſaid therefore to ſtand by faith,*Rom.* 11.20. *Well, becauſe of unbelief they were broken off;and thou ſtandeſt by faith.* Faith is a confirming grace,it doth build the Soul upon, it doth root the Soul in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and doth receive ſtrengthening, confirming, aſſiſting grace from Chriſt,according to to the Soul's neceſſity: So as Chriſtians, if you would be ſtrong in the Lord, you muſt get your faith ſtrengthened more and more.

Tenthly, *The Lord Chriſt, in the diſpence of mercy hath great reſpect unto the glory of his office-fulneſs, and office-faithfulneſs.* The Lord Chriſt in the communications of grace, hath not only a reſpect unto your neceſſity, but alſo to his own glory; and he will diſpenſe in ſuch a way, and at ſuch a ſeaſon, and under ſuch circumſtances as ſhall make moſt for the glory of his office-fulneſs,and office-faithfulneſs. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt therefore he comes in ſuch a way, and at ſuch a time, as ſhall moſt of all publiſh his glory unto thoſe to whom he comes, and before whom he comes. When the creature is run into emptineſs, and hath ſpent all, then doth Jeſus

Chriſt

Chriſt open his fountain-fulneſs. In the weakneſs of the creature does Jeſus Chriſt diſcover his all-power; and in the uncertainty of the creature, doth Jeſus Chriſt glorifie his conſtancy; in the darkneſs of an outward condition, doth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt cauſe his morning Star to ariſe, and ſhine from on high, that gives light to our feet, when we know not how to direct our own paths; when we have loſt all here below, and all our comforts have failed us, and forſaken us, then doth Jeſus Chriſt appear as a friend that ſtands up in a time of adverſity; that neither troubles, nor croſſes, nor trials, nor temptations, ſhall ſeparate. And he chuſes this moſt diſmal ſtate to come in, that he might glorifie his office-fulneſs, and his office-faithfulneſs; *that he might glorifie his office-fulneſs*, to let us know it is a never failing fulneſs, it is a fulneſs that is alwaies running over; that is not dry when ſtreams are dry, but can fill ſtreams at any time, when they are never ſo dry and empty, and then he comes *that he may glorifie his office-faithfulneſs*, to appear as one that never doth forget his people, that can bear all the concerns of his people upon his heart, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. *But we had the ſentence of death in our ſelves.* So the Lord Jeſus Chriſt he comes and diſcovers himſelf when the ſentence of death is upon our outward mercies, and upon all our outward ſupporters, that they are fading, dying, and falling down under us, then doth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt appear as our God; *Ye had the ſentence of death in your ſelves, that ye might truſt in the living God.* The Lord will ſo appear, as his appearance ſhall be unto the glory of his own Name in the Office that he is placed in by the Father: And therefore do but conſider what titles Jeſus

ſus Chriſt hath put upon himſelf, that are denominative thereof, *Pſal.* 9. 9. *The Lord alſo will be a refuge for the oppreſſed, a refuge in times of trouble.* A poor diſtreſſed Soul that hath no whither to go, that is driven off from all his former holds, and that hath all his other Wells of conſolation dryed up, Jeſus will be a refuge to ſuch an one, and that at ſuch a time. And *Pſal.* 10.14. *The poor committeth himſelf to thee, and thou art the helper of the fatherleſs.* And *Pſal.* 68. 5. *A Father of the fatherleſs, and a Judge of the widdow is God in his holy habitation.* Why, ſays the Soul; Now all is gone, my Father is gone, and my Husband is gone, and my Friends that uſe to comfort me have left me, and I am now a miſerable creature! No, ſays Chriſt, this is my time to appear to ſhew my ſelf to be a Father to the Fatherleſs, and a Judge of the widdow. And *Iſa.* 25. 4. *Thou haſt been a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible one is like a ſtorm againſt the wall.* Why Chriſtian, do not fear an outward diſtreſs then; do not fear a low condition; do not fear a breaking providence; why, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt doth then take his time to diſcover his All to you; he will then take his time to diſcover a Fountain to you that can never be exhauſted; he is a refuge to the poor and needy. And theſe conſiderations might be prevailing upon your ſpirits, to gather off your eyes from beholding other objects, and place them upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, where there is a ſufficient ground of Joy to us, whatever our condition is.

SERMON X.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation.

I Propoſed ſeveral weighty Conſiderations, to encourage your ſpirits to be getting up into this Life of Faith; I have already gone through Ten, and ſhall now proceed.

11. Conſider; *That to believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt without the leaſt encouragement of ſenſe, is the moſt noble exerciſe of Faith, and that which doth moſt pleaſe the Lord.* To believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt when he is breaking of you, and when he is frowning upon you, and when you have nothing elſe to live upon, this is the moſt noble exerciſe of Faith in this life. To believe on the Lord Jeſus when your heads are lifted up in the world, and when your Table is ſpread, and when your Borders are enlarged, is no great difficulty; but now to live by Faith upon Chriſt when there is no encouragement in the creature, this is the moſt noble exerciſe of Faith: What! ſays Senſe, live by Faith upon Chriſt when he hath impoveriſht me, and emptied me of all creature-enjoyments? Ay, now is the time to exerciſe Faith, and this is the moſt noble exerciſe of Faith, and that which doth moſt of all pleaſe the Lord,

Lord Such an exercise of Faith as this, was found in *Job*: When the Lord had taken away his estate, and taken away his Children, says *Job*, Job 1.21. *Blessed be the Name of the Lord.* There was a great exercise of Faith in that word; and such an exercise of Faith was found in *David*, in the case of *Ziklag*; he had a little place given him in the enemies Country, where he might live alone, but he had it not long before enemies came and smote the place of his habitation, and take away his relation and his goods, and leave him nothing but ruines, that when he returned, he found nothing but emptiness, a heap of Ashes: What does *David* do then? he exercises Faith upon Jesus Christ, and *encouraged himself in the Lord his God.* And this is the exercise of Faith that the Prophet speaks of in our Text, and that which he is driving Believers up to: *When the Figg-tree shall not blossom*, &c. What is here left? here is nothing for sense to live upon; *yet*, says he, *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* Such a noble exercise of Faith was found in the Woman of *Canaan*, in the midst of all discouragements; she had discouragements from the Disciples of Christ, they were not so kind to her as they might have been; but that was not all, but she met with discouragements from the Lord Jesus Christ himself, unto whom she made her applications; he seems to give her a repulse, and checks her forwardness, and yet she goes over to the Lord Jesus, and in a bold act, ventures upon him alone: Why Christians, whatever are your discouragements from Sense, yet in the face of all rebukes to cast your self upon the Lord Jesus and comfort your Souls in his All-fulness, is the most noble act of Faith that you can put forth.

12. *The great improbabilities of relief and ſuccour after grace, whatever your caſe is, are not anſwerable to the improbabilities that your Souls were in before grace, and Chriſt Jeſus helped you then.* Chriſt came thorow them all, and with eaſe removed them to do your Souls good. Do but conſider, you that ſit down with your hearts full of diſcouragement, upon the loſs of a creature, or upon the emptyings of providence; do but conſider how unlikely and improbable your condition was of help and ſuccour before you did believe on Chriſt; you were then covered over with the ſhadow of death; you were then in a hopeleſs condition; Who had then any hope of you? When you were ſeen marching in the fury of your ſpirits againſt the Lord? Who would have thought that there were hope in the Lord for you? You were at the very brink of Death, and at the very brink of Hell; there was (as it were) but a hairs breadth between you and Hell, and who would have thought that you ſhould have been recovered? And then the Lord Jeſus he broke thorough all the improbabilities of your ſtate to ſave you, and do you think that he cannot break thorough all the improbabilities of your preſent ſtate to comfort you? He came leaping over greater mountains of oppoſition and diſcouragement and impoſſibility (I mean as to other help;) I ſay, he came leaping over greater mountains of impoſſibility in his firſt dealings with you, than there are for him to come thorough in his after-dealings with you, *Cant.* 2. 8. *The voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.* Theſe mountains, and theſe hills did lye between Chriſt and you, that were

were the improbabilities, (or I may call them the impoſſibilities of your ſtate as to help and relief in a rational conſideration and apprehenſion. Now Jeſus Chriſt he skipt over this mountain, and the other mountain, that lay in his way, and he came unto your Souls to do you good; and if Jeſus Chriſt hath done this, do you think that he will not do the leſſer? When you were without grace, did he bring grace into your Souls? and do you think that he cannot comfort you now when you want comfort? Do you think that he cannot bleſs you with the annexed bleſſings of your ſtate, when he hath brought in the great fundamental bleſsings of your ſtate? Chriſtians, you ſhould reaſon thus, I was once ready to die, and the Lord Jeſus came and ſaved me; I was in a Soul-undone ſtate, and Jeſus Chriſt hath ſet me up; and what, hath he ſet up my Soul, and cannot he ſet up my Body? Hath he made up the great breach that was upon my ſpiritual condition? and cannot he make up the breaches that are in my outward condition? Jeſus Chriſt came and pluckt me out of the fire when I was burning, and the fire was ſo hot, that none could take me out but Jeſus Chriſt; he came and ſnatcht me out of the paw of the Lion and the Bear, and none could reſcue me but he; and he that came over all theſe impoſſibilities to ſave you, do you think that he cannot make up a breach in the loſs of a relation? or make up a diſtreſs in your outward condition? the Lord that hath done the greater, can eaſily do the leſſer.

13. Again; *To rejoyce only in viſibles and ſenſibles, is to go no further than thoſe may go that have no intereſt in Chriſt.* I pray conſider it; To have

your ſpirits born up only by ſenſible ſupports, is not to exceed thoſe that are ſtrangers to Jeſus Chriſt, that have not an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt as you have: For your ſpirits to riſe and fall only as the creature ebbs and flows, this is to do no more than a carnal man doth; Is this living upon Chriſt? Is this to make Chriſt your Joy? and Chriſt the Peace and the Comfort of your Life? Says Chriſt in another caſe, To love thoſe that love you, and to do good to thoſe that do good to you; if you do no more, Publicans and Sinners do this. The Chriſtian is under peculiar and diſtinguiſhing bleſſings, and it is expected that he ſhould peculiarly and diſtinguiſhingly live under the diſtinguiſhing bleſſings of his ſtate, *Matth.* 6. 31, 32. *Wherefore take no thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink? or wherewith ſhall we be clothed? for after all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek.* Why, ſays Chriſt, to be ſo thoughtful about our outward condition as others are, is to place our ſelves in common with them: Says he, *After theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek.* It is the caſe of a Gentile to ſay, when his outward comforts are gone, O now muſt I die! now there is no further help for me, I muſt now periſh; this is the language of a Gentile, that hath no intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt. O you that have intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt! what! will you take up the language of a Gentile? O no! having a God to go to, you muſt live upon that God that you have given up your ſelves to. God doth expect a diſtinguiſhing acting under the diſtinguiſhing bleſſings that he hath brought into your condition; therefore know, that to rejoyce only in viſibles, is to ſet your ſelves in common with thoſe that have

no

no intereſt in Chriſt; and is not this to diſhonour your intereſt, and to reflect upon the Lord of your intereſt, to live in joy when the Creatures are about you, and to ſit down diſcouraged, when Creatures are taken from you?

14. *Faith exerciſed upon the Lord Jeſus will have an univerſal influence upon all other graces in your hearts*: Chriſtians do but once exerciſe faith upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt under a ſinking, diſcouraging providence, and you will immediately ſee and find a ſtrange alteration in your hearts, you will find thoſe graces that are weak begin to gather ſtrength, and you will find thoſe graces to ariſe, and appear, and ſhine forth, that you could ſcarce diſcern; faith exerciſed upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will have a mighty influence upon your love, to raiſe that when the Soul is got into Chriſt, and can improve his intereſt in Chriſt; O how will his Soul be enlarged, and his heart burn in love to him who is the Lord of his intereſt, and of his comforts; faith exerciſed upon the Lord Jeſus, will have a mighty influence upon your hopes, that were even juſt giving up the Ghoſt to your apprehenſions; faith exerciſed upon the Lord Jeſus will have a mighty influence upon your patience, to ſtrengthen and quicken that, when a frowning providence comes that would royl your Spirits, and put you beſides your ſelves, and drive you out of a Chriſtian frame; faith will raiſe up your patience, and learn you to be quiet under the hand of the Lord; faith exerciſed upon Chriſt will have an influence upon your joy, it will cauſe a mighty and wonderful rejoycing in your Souls, that you have ſuch a

full Jeſus, to live upon; faith exerciſed upon the Lord Jeſus will have an influence upon your zeal, and will wonderfully excite you, and ſtir you up unto all duties of ſerving and following the Lord; ſo as Chriſtians, do but lay theſe conſiderations together, and you will ſee what great encouragement you have to glory in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whatſoever your outward condition is, and you will ſee the way of living by faith upon Chriſt to be clear, and to be the only way that the Chriſtian ſhould walk in.

Well, having premiſed theſe things, we ſhall now come to give you ſome particular directions, how you may get up your faith, and your Spirits in the exerciſe of faith unto a glorying and rejoycing in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whatſoever your ſaddening outward providences are. And here,

1. *If you would come to live upon Chriſt Jeſus alone in the ſaddeſt providences of your ſtate, then entertain and keep up low thoughts of the great things of this world*: Truly Chriſtians you may think of it what you will, but while you have hearts that are magnifying and adoring of the things of the world, and the enjoyments of the world, and counting theſe great things, you will never come goſpelly to live upon the Lord Jeſus, your thoughts muſt be altered in and about the comforts of this life, and you muſt poſſeſs your hearts with this, that they are the ſmalleſt comforts of your ſtate, and the bleſſings of this life they are the leaſt bleſſings that the Lord hath given you; you muſt have very low thoughts of the world, and of the comforts of it; if you would come to live by faith upon Chriſt Jeſus

ſus alone, whileſt you have vaſt thoughts o your creature enjoyments, and creature com forts, and creature conditions, and ſuppoſe your comforts to lye here, and your comforts to lye there ſhort of Chriſt; alas, you will be driven out of all the exerciſe of faith in an emptying providence. I will give you two inſtances for this in the *eleventh Chapter of the Hebrews*; the firſt is that of Father *Abraham, in the* 8 *and* 9 *verſes. By Faith* Abraham *when he was called to go out into a place which he ſhould after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went; by faith he ſojourned in the land of promiſe, as in a ſtrange Countrey dwelling in Tabernacles with* Iſaac, &c. Here *Abraham* was called to leave the poſſeſſions of his natural place, the poſſeſſion that he was born to, and to follow Chriſt whither he would lead him, and to accept of that condition that Chriſt would place him in, and to ſtand to the allowance of God let it be more or leſs; this *Abraham* was called to. Now it is ſaid *Abraham by Faith did obey this command, and call of God, and went out*; why, how did faith help him here? doubtleſs by ſhewing of him Chriſt Jeſus, for faith in every exerciſe hath to do with Chriſt, and therefore his faith carried him up to Chriſt, and when he was once got up to Chriſt, then behold how low were theſe things to him; my Countrey Lord; ſaies he? what is my Country to thee? I will leave my Countrey to follow thee; and my Friends are nothing to me, and my poſſeſſions are nothing to me, I will leave all to follow thee; what a low eſteem had he of theſe things? And the other inſtance is that of *Moſes*

in

in verſ. 24, 25, 26, 27. *By faith* Moſes *when he was come to yeurs, refuſed to be called the Son of* Pharaohs *Daughter, chooſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, eſteeming the reproaches of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of* Egypt, *for he had reſpect to the recompence of reward.* Here are great things that *Moſes* left for the ſake of Chriſt, he left the Court, yea, he probably left the Crown of *Egypt*, and all the glories thereof; now he did this by faith, the Creature was of a low eſteem with him. O alaſs what is it to be called the Son of *Pharaohs* Daughter, and what is it to be an heir of an earthly Crown, and to be King of *Egypt*? I had rather be afflicted, and ſpoyled, and deſtitute in my outward condition with Chriſt, then to enjoy all theſe things without him; Chriſtians you muſt get mortified affections to all enjoyments on this ſide Chriſt, if you would come to live upon, and glory in Chriſt alone.

2. *Acquaint your ſelves more with the royalties of Chriſt, and the greatneſs of his Goſpel-glory, as he is propoſed the object of your faith, if you would come to glory in him alone, and live upon him in an empty condition*: One great reaſon why we can take no more comfort in Chriſt in an empty condition is, becauſe we are ſuch ſtrangers to the fulneſs of Chriſt Jeſus; we don't know what is in Chriſt, we know not what Chriſt can do, what is in his heart and hand to give forth to you; Chriſtians if you would live more by faith upon Chriſt, then view Chriſt in his royalties of Grace. Look into the length

of

of Christ, and into the breadth of Christ, and see what he is the owner and possessour of, what the Father hath betrusted him with; view the extent of his Offices, and consider the largeness of his power, and what he is able to do for you; study and acquaint your selves with the royalties of Christ, as he is proposed an object for your faith to fix upon; there is no condition but he can comfort you in it, let the condition be never so comfortless in its self, study the fulness of the Lord Jesus.

3. *Get by faith upon the all-sufficiency of Christ, and there take a prospect of your losses, and of your troubles, and then you will see them to be but small.* You go (Christians) and stand below Christ, and there you look upon your troubles and afflictions, and then indeed they seem very great; ay, but get upon the all-sufficiency of Christ, and then view them, get but upon the mount, and look down upon all your losses and crosses, and they will seem little things then. What is this loss that I have sustained, to what I have in the Lord Jesus Christ? what is my poor empty vessel to the great fulness that is in the Ocean of the Lord Jesus? If you did stand upon the all-sufficiency of Christ, and look upon the disasters of your outward condition, they would seem to be but like a little Vessel brought to the great Sea, that is presently filled, and yet there is no lessening of the water in the Ocean, but the Sea is as full as ever.

4. *Alwaies keep the invisibles of Christs Grace, and of Christs glory in your Eye*: It is something a strange thing, but 'tis the mystery of faith; I say

ſay keep inviſibles in your eye, faith knows the meaning of it, faith will eſpy an inviſible thing, that which ſenſe can diſcern nothing of, faith will eſpy and keep ſight of; now this was one way that *Moſes* had to get up into a living upon the Lord Jeſus by faith, he kept inviſibles in his Eye, *he ſaw him that was inviſible*, Heb. 11. 27. *he endured, as ſeeing him that was inviſible*; and what is the deſcription that the Apoſtle gives of faith in a Goſpel exerciſe that we are ſpeaking of, but that which I have told you, the diſcerning of inviſibles? *Heb.* 11. 1. *Now faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen*: Faith in its exerciſe will ranſack among the promiſes, the promiſes both of grace and glory, and there will eſpy a great treaſure, and ſhew the Soul this, as that which is his, and belongs to him; now Chriſtian view the promiſes of grace, and the promiſes of glory that are in the hands of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſee the inviſible graces, and the inviſible comforts, and the inviſible bleſſings that are contained in them, and never loſe the ſight of theſe inviſibles, but keep them alwaies in your eye, and then you will ſee a glorious Jeſus, that your Souls will love to dwell upon, and you won't dwell from him.

5. *Never ground your faith & your hope upon your experiences, but upon the promiſes, which is alwaies attended with a wonderful working power*; If that you ground your faith and your hope upon your experiences, if your ſecond trial be greater then your firſt, your faith will be poſed, and you will ſit down under diſcouragement; indeed there is a holy

a holy and Chriſtian uſe that is to be made of your experiences, but you muſt never ground your faith and hope upon them; for God is alwaies an out-doing God, he will out-do his own act, he will go further in one act then he will do in another; if you ground your faith upon your experiences, when you come into a new ſtreight that you never came into before, your faith will fail; do but conſider this in the *Iſraelites*, if they had gone no further then their experiences, what a loſs had they been in? nay upon this account they were at a great loſs, they only conſidered what God had done for them, and did not conſider what he could do, and what a boundleſs power was working through the promiſe for them, and therefore though they were delivered through the Red Sea; yet ſay they, can God ſpread a Table in the Wilderneſs? *Moſes*, what, haſt thou brought us into the Wilderneſs to deſtroy us? there is no Bread here, there is no Water here, how can we ſubſiſt? They never had experience of the wonders of Gods power in thoſe particular caſes, and therefore their experiences could not carry them through, but they were to exerciſe faith upon the promiſe, that had a boundleſs power working with it, and that would have told them, that God can ſpread a Table in the Wilderneſs, and can command a rock to give out water for the *Iſraelites* neceſſity; and that can tell you that there is no ſtreight too great for Jeſus to deliver you out of. Faith in the promiſe will tell you that you never experienced, you never ſaw to the utmoſt end of Chriſts

power

power yet; you never ſaw into the midſt of his treaſures of grace; you have ſeen but a little way; Faith in the Promiſe will tell you this; therefore never ground your Faith and Hope upon your Experiences, though they have been large, but upon the Promiſes, that have alwaies a boundleſs power working with them.

Sixthly; And then conſider, *That it is your duty to come and claim the grace of Chriſt, and put in upon your Intereſt according to your exigency.* I ſay, if you would live by Faith upon the Lord Jeſus, then claim the grace of your Intereſt according to the exigency of your ſtate. Sirs, are you intereſted in Jeſus? then Jeſus is yours, all Jeſus is yours, all that he is, is yours for you, and all that he hath is yours, and for you. Now, if you would live by Faith upon him, then come and put in, bring your claim, and ſay, the power of Jeſus Chriſt is mine, and the grace of Jeſus Chriſt is mine; 'tis for me, 'tis under ſpecial promiſe to me, and 'tis under peculiar engagement to me; it is mine to live upon; I will lean upon the Arm of the Lord's ſtrength, & I will glory in his fulneſs in my own emptineſs. There muſt be in the exerciſe of Faith a peculiar claim that the Soul muſt lay unto Chriſt, and a peculiar improving of the fulneſs of his Intereſt, according to the emptineſs of your ſtate. And thus Chriſtians you may be ſupported, whatever you meet withal in this world. Suppoſe you ſuſtain a loſs, why, in a freſh application to Chriſt you will have it made up in him; and if a great failure and diſappointment come in upon you, in a renewed act of Faith upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, applying ſomething of his fulneſs and ſweetneſs, you will have your condition filled; & ſo as it is

emptied

emptied in the creature, it will be filled with grace, and with Chriſt.

SERMON XI.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

WE are now upon the directing of the Believer that is able in ſome meaſure to make out his Intereſt in this Jeſus, to live upon him, and to rejoyce in him in all trials. Of the Directions, five or ſix I have already given you, and ſhall now proceed.

7. In the ſeventh place; *If you would live by Faith upon Chriſt, ſo as to fetch in joy and comfort from him in every condition, then labour to bring your will to your condition, and keep your ſpirit within the confines of the will of God under all the various diſpoſes of providence.* The recoilings and claſhings of our will with our condition, is a main hinderance unto our rejoycing in, and acting Faith upon the Lord Jeſus under a ſad providence: And the great reaſon why ſome perſons are under ſuch great diſſatisfaction in their own ſpirits, that they know not how to bear the troubles of their ſtate, is, becauſe their wills are not brought to their condition; but they go about to bring their condition to their wills; and when any thing conſiderable comes in upon

upon them that doth not ſuit with their wills, it cauſeth royls, diſquiets, and diſturbances of ſpirit, and diſcompoſure of heart, and ſuch a Soul will never rejoyce in Chriſt in an evil day. Now Chriſtians, if you would get into the Life of Faith, you muſt then bring your will to your condition, be what it will; own the diſpoſing hand of God, that makes the change, whatever your change is, and yield obedience to the Lord's will, that hath the over-ruling power of your ſtate, and keep your ſpirits within the confines of the will of God; otherwiſe a croſs, or a tryal in your outward condition will make a great alteration in the inward frame of your ſpirit. I will give you a few Inſtances for the clearing of this. *Paul* was a man that rejoyced and gloried in Chriſt Jeſus, when he had almoſt nothing elſe left him in this world; many times his heart was made ſad among the Churches of Chriſt that he came to make glad; and as to loſſes, who met with more? ſays he, *I was in perils oft, and in hunger, and in diſtreſs, and in nakedneſs*; and yet this man he glories in tribulations; he counted it all joy when he fell into divers tribulations; how came this about, that this man was got thus into a rejoycing in Chriſt Jeſus, when the whole world frowned upon him? He tells us, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12. his will was brought unto his condition. I ſpeak not, ſays he, in a complaining way, *in reſpect of want, for I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content, for I know how to want, and how to abound.* Says he, if God empties me, my will is brought to my condition; I am willing to be emptied; if the Lord will make me poor, and take away what I have, I am willing to be made poor; my ſpirit is

brought

brought to my condition: He that can live in the confines of the will of God, will live comfortably and rejoyce in the Lord at all times. Another inſtance for this is *Job*; *Job* you know was a man that was ſorely tryed, I think as much as ever man was upon earth; now *Job*'s will was brought to his condition; and hence came he to rejoyce in the Lord, *Job* 1. 21. Now *Job*'s wife's ſpirit was not brought to her condition, ſhe could not tell how to be contented, for ſhe ſaid unto him, *Chap.* 2. 10. *Doſt thou ſtill retain thy integrity? Curſe God and die; but he ſaid unto her, Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh; what, ſhall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil?* As if he had ſaid, It was the Lord that filled me, and ſhall not the Lord empty me? We were ſatisfied when the Lord was filling of us, and ſhall we not be ſatisfied now the Lord is emptying of us? Another inſtance is that of good old *Eli*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 18. *Samuel* told him every whit, and held nothing from him; and he ſaid, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good:* Why, if the Lord will ſtrip me, ſays he, I am willing to be ſtript; if the Lord will take away my Children, and take away my comforts, and break up my houſe; *It is the Lord*, I am contented; if the Lord will do ſo, let him; my will is brought to my condition; *Let him do as ſeemeth him good.* So *David*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 26. *But if he ſay thus; I have no delight in thee; behold here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him.* And thus it was with our Lord Jeſus, the greateſt inſtance of all; *Father*, ſays he, *not my will, but thy will be done.* Let my Father chuſe for me; I will not bring my will into competition with his: If he will have me to

drink off this Cup, I will drink it; if he will have me to lay down my life, I will; if he will have all my glory obſcured, it ſhall be ſo; if he will have me a man of ſorrows, his will be done, and not my will. You do not know Chriſtians, what an alteration of heart, and what an alteration of life this living in the will of God will make.

8. *Captivate and throw out all the ſuggeſtions of ſenſe and reaſon upon the riſing difficulties of your ſtate.* If that reaſon ſpeak over your hearts in a ſtrait, and ſenſe give the ruling word over your ſpirits in your condition, it will certainly cauſe you to repine and murmure, and to ſin againſt God: Senſe and reaſon are great enemies unto our peace and comfort: If ſenſe and reaſon have liberty to ſpeak, and to be heard in your hearts, they will certainly lay your ſpirits under a diſcouragement, and drive you off from the Lord. Thus it was with *Iſrael* when they were in the wilderneſs, as ſoon as they were come out of *Egypt*, where they had their Rivers and their Pools, and their Ponds of Water, and where they had their Fleſh-pots, and were fed to the full: They came into a howling wilderneſs, into a dry and barren place, where they had no Wells of Water, where there was no plowing, nor ſowing, then they fell a murmuring and chiding of *Moſes*, and ſaid, Wherefore haſt thou brought us hitherinto this place to ſlay us? for it is not ſuppoſed to be rational that we can live here in this wilderneſs, but if we abide here we muſt die, *Numb.* 11. 4, 5, 6. *And the mixt multitude that were among them fell a luſting, and all the children of* Iſrael *wept again, ſaying, Who ſhall give us fleſh to eat? We remember the fleſh that we ate in* Egypt *freely, the Cucumbers,*

cumbers and the Millons, &c. And *Pſal.* 78 19. *Yea, they ſpake againſt God: They ſaid, Can God furniſh a Table in the wilderneſs?* And *Numb.* 20. 12. *Behold there is no water for the Congregation; and they gathered themſelves together againſt* Moſes, *and againſt* Aaron, *and they chod with* Moſes, *ſaying, would to God we had died when our Brethren died before the Lord? and why have ye brought up the Congregation of the Lord into this wilderneſs, that we and our Cattel ſhould die there? and wherefore have ye made us to come out of* Egypt, *to bring us unto this evil place? It is no place of ſowing ſeed, or of Fields, or of Vineyards, or of Pomegranats.* Here you ſee ſenſe and reaſon ſpake over their condition, and how did it lay their Souls under diſcouragement? And if you do but review at your leiſure, the great murmurings of this people, when they were in the wilderneſs; it was ſomething or other that ſenſe and reaſon ſuggeſted to them under ſome providence or other that diſquieted their ſpirits; it was through the ſuggeſtion of ſenſe and reaſon that *Zacharias* queſtioned the truth of the Word of God ſent to him by the Angel about having a Son, *Luk.* 1. 18. *And* Zacharias *ſaid to the Angel, whereby ſhall I know this, for I am an old man, and my Wife well ſtricken in years.* It was from the inſtigation of ſenſe and reaſon that that unbelieving Lord did queſtion that great plenty that the Prophet told him ſhould be the next day, 2 *King.* 7. 1, 2 *Thus ſaith the Lord, To morrow about this time ſhall a meaſure of fine flower be ſold for a ſhekel*, &c. *Then a Lord on whoſe hand the King leaned, anſwered the man of God, and ſaid, If the Lord ſhould make windows in Heaven, might this thing be?* He only argued upon

the Prophecy in his own reaſon, and in his own ſenſe, and this made him ſo unbelieving, as to reject the Prophecy of the Prophet. This ſenſe and reaſon made the Diſciples themſelves to queſtion the intention of the Lord about feeding ſo great a multitude as there was, with ſuch ſmall proviſion as they had, *Mark* 8.1,2. In thoſe daies the multitude being very great, *&c.* At the 14th verſe his Diſciples ſaid unto him, *From whence ſhall we buy bread that theſe may eat?* So that if you would get into this life of Faith, keep down ſenſe and reaſon, and caſt out their ſuggeſtions, which will not bring you near to, but ſet you further off from the Lord. Do not ſay upon a new difficulty, here is no way to eſcape, or upon a loſs, this or that is gone, and can never be made up to me again, but throw out the reaſonings of ſenſe; if the diſcouraging ſuggeſtions of ſenſe be reſiſted, and ſet by, Faith will then get up, and ſpeak in the heart.

9. *Look through and beyond the diſcouragements of ſecond Cauſes, unto the encouragements of the firſt Cauſe*; that is alwaies abſolute and independent, and there fix your eye in a ſtrait. Second Cauſes they are failable, but ſo is not the firſt Cauſe, that is the efficient of all; and the Lord who is the firſt Cauſe, and efficient of all, oftentimes dries up all creature ſtreams, and cauſes viſible humane help to fail, that we may ſee how great the firſt Cauſe is. Though the Lord doth ordinarily make uſe of ſecond Cauſes, yet the Lord will ſo walk towards us, to diſcover to us that he is not tyed to means, that he is not tyed to ſecond Cauſes; and he oft-times cauſeth viſible helps to fail, that our eyes may be upon him, as the firſt abſolute independent Cauſe of

of all. I will give you an inſtance for this, and it is that of *Iſrael*; *Iſrael* was in the way of the Lord marching towards the Land of Promiſe; and as ſoon as ever they were come into the way of the Lord, that they were entered into the wilderneſs, they were brought to the mouth of the Red Sea. Now all ſecond Cauſes failed for help; there was not a Ship, nor a Boat to be got to carry the Hoſts of *Iſrael* over the water; but the firſt Cauſe was not at a ſtrait, and therefore ſays *Moſes* from the Lord, *Iſrael ſtand ſtill and ſee the Salvation of God:* Now, let not your eyes be upon the ſecond Cauſe, but upon the firſt Cauſe, and you ſhall ſee what a deliverance God can make for you; and he carried all the Hoſt of *Iſrael*, men, women and children through the drowning Sea, and not a man, woman nor child was loſt in the paſſage, and yet there was neither Ship nor Boat to aid them over. And ſo afterwards when they came at *Jordan*; the waters were before them, there was no Boat to ſwift them over the waters, but the Lord he commands *Iſrael* to go on, and the waters made a lane for them; they run on heaps on both ſides, and *Iſrael* hath a path made in the great deep for them. And I will give you an inſtance now of a good man, a man of great Faith, and that was *Moſes*; *Moſes* in a conſiderable ſtrait fixes his eye upon the ſecond Cauſe, and pored upon the diſcouragements of that, and was loſt in his ſpirit by not looking beyond unto the firſt Cauſe, and the encouragements that the firſt Cauſe did adminiſter. It is *Numb.* 11. 19, 20. 21. and ſo on. The people in the preceding verſes, they murmured againſt *Moſes*, becauſe they had no fleſh; they were come from their full Tables in *Egypt*, and they had not now

their dainties to live upon, and they did not know now how to be content; why, ſays God, you ſhall not eat one day, nor two, *but even a whole month.* Now ſee what *Moſes* ſaid, at the 21th verſe; *The people among whom I am are ſix hundred thouſand footmen, and thou haſt ſaid, I will give them fleſh that they may eat a whole month. Shall the Flocks and the Herds be ſlain for them to ſuffice them? or, ſhall all the Fiſhes of the Sea be gathered together for them to ſuffice them,* &c. Here is the relation. God tells this whole Congregation that they ſhould have Fleſh to eat for a month; they ſhould eat their bellies full; they ſhould eat till they could eat no more. *Moſes* had his eye fixed upon ſecond Cauſes, and not upon the firſt Cauſe, and he queſtions this; *Lord,* ſays he, *how can this be?* So many hundred thouſands of us; and what, ſhall we all have fleſh to eat? Now on the other hand, we read of *Aſa,* when a mighty Hoſt came out againſt him, 2 *Chron.* 14.11. *An Hoſt of a thouſand thouſand* that came out againſt him; he lookt beyond the diſcouragements of ſecond Cauſes, unto the encouragements of the firſt Cauſe, that is abſolute and independent, and ſee how his ſpirit held up; *And* Aſa *cryed unto the Lord his God, and ſaid, Lord, it is nothing with thee to ſave, whether with many, or with thoſe that have no might; help us O Lord our God, for we reſt on thee, and in thy Name we go againſt this multitude,* &c. He looks unto God the firſt Cauſe of all, and he ſaw there the Power of God was enough to charge this whole Army, and to engage againſt this great multitude that came out againſt him. And this was the Prophet's Spirit, and the courſe that he took here in the Text; all ſecond Cauſes

Cauſes failed, and frowned, and adminiſtred only diſcouragement; *The Figg-tree that bloſſomed not, there was no fruit in the Vine, the labour of the Olive failed, the Fields yielded no meat, the Flocks were cut off from the fold, and there was no herd in the ſtall.* Here was a failure of all ſecond Cauſes, now, ſaith he, I will look unto the firſt Cauſe; *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* Chriſtians, let me tell you, that if you lay the weight of your caſe upon ſecond Cauſes, you will never come to rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus in a ſtrait. Remember therefore, that when ſuch a ſtream is dried up, the fountain is full ſtill, and the fountain can ſend out more waies than one. The fountain that iſſued out a ſtream in ſuch a place, can iſſue out a ſtream in another place; as long as the fountain is full, there is no fear of want; and if you would come to live upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in a ſtrait, you muſt keep your eye upon the fountain that is ever full, and overflows.

SERMON XII.

Habakkuk 3. 18.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will Joy in the God of my Salvation.

WE are upon the Directions.

10. *In the tenth place, if you would live by faith upon Jesus Christ, so as to fetch joy and comfort from him under the saddest providences of your state, then consider the unchangeable love of Jesus Christ that meteth out, and manageth unto blessed ends all the losses, crosses, trials and tribulations of your state.*

The hard thoughts that we have of our troubles, and the hard thoughts that we have of the Lord when we are troubled, do drive us off from him, and lay our Spirits under great discouragements; O saies the Soul, live upon Jesus Christ, and rejoice in him! How can I do that, when he comes out against me as mine enemy? he writes bitter things against me, he is undoing of me, he is breaking and spoyling of me; and what! can I rejoice in him? The hard thoughts that the Church had of the Lord was that that did so much overwhelm her Spirit, when she came into a low condition, *his mercy is clean gone, and he hath forgotten to be gracious, he will*

be

be merciful to me no more, his mercies are ſhut up, and fail for evermore, and ſuch bitter expreſſions as theſe are; and how can we now rejoice in this Lord, and all this while you underſtand not the Lord, nor the deſign of the Lord, and by your ignorance you come to wrong your own Spirits in your preſent condition, by overcharging them with a diſcouragement that the providence rightly conſidered as ſtated by the Lord, adminiſters not; for do but conſider, that there is unchangeable love engaged in, and mixed with every adverſe providence; the Lord he ſtrikes, and he wounds in a way of love, he breaks in upon this comfort and the other, and makes breaches in your condition, in a way of love and grace; the Lord he takes away a creature comfort from a Chriſtian to make more room in his heart for Chriſt. The Lord he puts him into the furnace, that he may purify him from his droſs; the Lord he purgeth him to make him partaker of his holineſs. The Lord he ſhakes him, and ſhakes his creature ſtanding, and his relative ſtanding under a creature conſideration and condition, that he might take faſter hold upon Chriſt Jeſus; he ſends out every tribulation upon you, with a charge to do you good, and to uſe you kindly; as *David* when he ſent out his Army, gave them a charge, deal gently for my ſake with the young man *Abſolom*: So ſaies Jeſus Chriſt unto every Croſs that befals you, uſe my Servant kindly for my ſake, treat him well; ſaies the Lord, unto a loſs, work for the gain of ſuch a Servant of mine; ſaies the Lord, unto ſuch a Croſs, do you try, and

do

do you refine, and do you purge, and do you better my Servant; he ſaith unto ſuch a tribulation; go, and do ſuch Servants of mine good; there is unchangeable love and grace that meteth out, and manageth unto bleſſed ends all the croſſes of your condition, *Job* 5. 17. *Behold happy is the man whom God correcteth, therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty.* We ſay croſt is the man, and broken is the man, and undone is the man, that is ſo and ſo dealt withal; ay; but ſaies God, happy is the man, there is a bleſſing under the croſs, there is love and grace in the trial, that thou doſt not conſider (Chriſtian) and this will be more advantage to thee then all the diſadvantages that the Croſs can bring in upon thee, in its ſelf conſidered, *Proverbs* 3. 12. *For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son in whom he delighteth*; So as there is love in all the Lords corrections, and *Iſaiah* 48. 10. *Behold I have refined thee, but not with Silver, I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction*; I have put thee into the furnace, ſaies the Lord, there is my love working towards thee, there is my love ſpeaking to thee, there have I been refining, and purging, and purifying of thee, to make thee more excellent gold for my uſe; this is the deſign of the Lord, *Heb.* 12,5,6. *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you, as unto Children; My Son deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him, for whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*; and *Rev.* 3. 19.

3. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten;* and *Rom.* 8. 35, 36, &c. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* None of theſe things ſhall do it, ſaies he. So as if you would come to a rejoycing in the Lord in a trying hour, then conſider the unchangeable love of Jeſus Chriſt that doth mete out and manage the Croſſes that you are called to bear. *It was good for me,* ſaies David, *that I was afflicted;* and again, ſaies he, *Pſal.* 116. 10. *I believed, therefore have I ſpoken, I was greatly afflicted; I ſaid in my haſt all men are lyars, what ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* Surely the Prophet had not only the remove of the affliction in his Eye, but alſo the deſign of God in the affliction, that he ſaith, *what ſhall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?* I will take up the cup of Salvation, and bleſs his name; he hath greatly afflicted me, and ſorely diſtreſſed me. I will take up the cup of Salvation, and bleſs his name; here doubtleſs was an eye upon the deſign; well then, if you would come to live rejoycingly in the Lord in all conditions; conſider his unchangeable love that doth order and diſpoſe the trials that you are exerciſed with.

11. In the eleventh place; *Conſider the auxiliary relations that Chriſt ſtands in to your Souls, and the grace that is diſpenſed upon them.* You look Chriſtians in an evil day, below the comforts of your ſtate, and that is the reaſon you are ſo hurried in your own Spirits; you pore upon an emptying providence, and don't conſider the filling

ling relations that Chriſt is unchangeably entered into with your Souls: relations of grace that are alwaies comforting, and alwaies relieving, and that have new ſupplies of grace alwaies ſpringing up in them for your aſſiſtance. I will give you a touch of ſome of them. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is called the Father of believers, he was promiſed under that name, in *Iſa.* 9. 6. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſeller, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father.* So Iſaiah 8. 18. *Behold I and the Children whom the Lord hath given me, are for ſigns and for wonders in Iſrael;* behold I and the Children, we are the Lords Children. And *Iſaiah* 63. 16. *Doubtleſs thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledgeth us not*; O Lord thou art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlaſting; this is ſpoken of Chriſt Jeſus. Now the relation of a Father, it is a relation of pity; it is a relation of love, it is a relation of tenderneſs; when the Lord tells us he ſtands in this relation unto us, he tells us that he will exerciſe the tenderneſs, the pity, and the kindneſs of a Father unto his Child. Now a Father, a tender-hearted Father, he will conſider his Child in all conditions, in all his ſtreights, and though it be a rebellious Child, yet ſtill he will conſider it, and he will exerciſe the pity and the tenderneſs of a Father to it; this you may ſee in *David* to *Abſolom*; *Abſolom* was a rebellious Son that proclaimed war againſt his Father, and would have cut off his Father; and yet ſee how *Davids* bowels did work towards his rebellious Son when he heard he was dead;

O Ab-

O Abſolom, my Son, my Son, would to God I had died for thee, O Abſolom, *my Son, my Son*; theſe were the workings of his heart towards rebellious *Abſolom*; now if there be ſo much tenderneſs in a Father in the fleſh towards his Children, much more in Chriſt to his Children. Saies Chriſt, *Luke* 11. 13. *If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more ſhall your Heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Why, the Fathers in the fleſh cannot out-love Jeſus Chriſt, they have not a larger heart for their Children then Chriſt hath for his; (again) Jeſus Chriſt he is ſtiled *the Husband* of Believers; now that is a relation of great care and tenderneſs; the faithful, wiſe, able, loving Husband, how will he defend his Wife, and how will he provide for his Wife, and how will he ſafeguard his Wife, and how will he pity his Wife, in all her exigencies, ſhe ſhall be as his own Soul, *Eph.* 5. 28, 29, 30. *So ought men to love their Wives, even as their own bodies, he that loveth his Wife, loveth himſelf, and no man ever yet hated his own fleſh; this is a great myſtery, but I ſpeak concerning Chriſt and the Church.* So as all believers they are betrothed and married unto Jeſus Chriſt, and Jeſus Chriſt as a loving, able, wiſe, tender-hearted Husband, will ſecure, and defend, and provide for thoſe that are married to him, much more then the Husbands in the fleſh can do for their Wives.

Again; Jeſus Chriſt he is *our Brother, our elder Brother*; Now a Brother under the law, was not to ſee any of his younger Brethren under decay, and in a low condition, but he was to relieve

lieve him; *if thy Brother be waxen poor, and fall into decay, then thou ſhalt relieve him*, was a Scripture law; now ſaies Chriſt, *I am not aſhamed to call them Brethren*; and he will be a moſt loving, tender-hearted, faithful Brother unto all his Brethren, whatſoever their ſtreights and their trials are. Chriſtians, do but propoſe thoſe aiding, relieving, auxiliary relations of grace, that Chriſt ſtands in to your Souls, and exerciſe faith upon them, propoſe them I ſay to your faith, and exerciſe faith upon them; do you conſider in your own imaginations; what if you had ſuch a Father, ſo wiſe, ſo able, ſo loving, ſo tender hearted, how ſhould your heart rejoice in him! why Chriſtian, you have all that you can imagine in Chriſt, as a Father to you! O you would think, if you had ſuch a tender Husband, ſuch a kind hearted Husband, how would you take comfort in him. Chriſtian, thou haſt all in Chriſt Jeſus, that thou canſt imagine, and much more abundantly, imagine the lovingeſt, faithfulleſt Brother, that ever was upon earth, and thou haſt more in Chriſt Jeſus, then can be imagined; Chriſt ſtands in all theſe relations to thee, and theſe relations are obligations unto him; according to the relation will he act and diſpenſe, and according to the obligation of every relation ſhall the diſpenſe be, ſo as he is not only a Husband, but you may believe that he will do all for you (being betrothed to him) that the relation of a Husband obligeth him to, and he will do all as a Father for you, that the relation obligeth him to, & he will do all as a Brother, that the relation binds him to. And know Chriſtians, that you can never out-live the love and the grace

grace of the relations of Chriſt, neither can you ever burthen the love of any of his relations, you can never overcharge his love; there is a natural love ariſing in the heart of a Father towards his Children, a growing, ſpringing love every day, that notwithſtanding many provocations, ſtill the Father keeps his heart upon his Child; ſo though there are provocations in your way unto your heavenly Father, yet his heart is kept towards you, and his heart is the heart of a Father; and his heart is the heart of a Husband, and his heart is the heart of a Brother, and you can never burthen his love, nor out-live his grace, nor over-believe the fulneſs of theſe relations of grace that he ſtands in to your Souls. Now then, if you would come to an exerciſe of faith upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, then conſider the auxiliary relations of grace that he ſtands in to your Souls, and what is diſpenſible upon thoſe relations, and wait upon him for the fulfilment of all.

12. Again; *If you would come to live a life of faith upon Chriſt Jeſus, rejoycing in him under a ſtrait and trial of providence, then take up a promiſe, and believe it upon the bare faithfulneſs of God, and never diſpute with the difficulty, or apprehended impoſſibility of it.* There are ſometimes great mountains of difficulty that lye before the promiſe, you muſt not conſult with theſe, Chriſtians, but conſult with the promiſes as they are in the hands of the faithfulneſs of God, and believe the truth of every promiſe, becauſe God hath ſpoken it; how unlikely and improbable ſoever unto ſenſe and reaſon the accompliſh-

compliſhment of it is, don't ſay how can this be? how can ſuch a promiſe be fulfilled? It is not likely it ſhould be fulfilled to me, ſo unſuitable and ſo unanſwerable; but eye the faithfulneſs of God that made the promiſe, and believe it upon Gods bare truth, becauſe he hath ſpoken it, when you have nothing elſe to encourage you to take it up: Thus it was with *Abraham*, the Father of believers, *Rom.* 4. 18, 19, 20, 21. *Who againſt hope believed in hope, and being not weak in faith, he conſidered not his own body, now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadneſs of* Sarahs *Womb.* There were unlikelyhoods of this promiſe ever being fulfilled, and if *Abraham* would have reaſoned according to ſenſe, why ſenſe would have ſuggeſted to him that this promiſe was a meer fallacy, a meer romance, that there was no truth, no certainty in it, what! he *a hundred years old* now, a dead man, almoſt his nature quite decayed, and *Sarah* e'en going into the grave, almoſt a dead Woman, nature quite decayed in her, and what, ſhall *Sarah* conceive, and have a Son? 'tis not likely, nor probable. Nay, ſaies reaſon, 'tis an impoſſible thing: now here had been a diſcouragement to his Spirit, if he had called in ſenſe and reaſon, and conſidered and debated the matter therewith, but he takes up the promiſe, and believes it upon the bare Word of God, upon his bare faithfulneſs; well ſaies *Abraham*, I am indeed an old Man, and *Sarah* my Wife is an old woman, but God hath ſaid I ſhall have a Child, and I believe it; here is no hope in nature, but I will believe it againſt hope, againſt all diſcourage-

couragement to my hope; I will believe God that hath ſpoken it is able to perform it, ſurely it ſhall be ſo; thus Chriſtians, when difficulties and diſcouragements incompaſs the promiſe, don't diſpute with the difficulties that lye in the way, but keep your eye upon the faithfulneſs of God, and believe the promiſe upon Gods bare word alone.

13. Again; *Sute the promiſe to your preſent ſtate, whatever it be, and ſet it at the head of your trial, and then wait for an accompliſhment.* I ſay ſingle out a promiſe ſutable to your ſtate, and ſet it at the head of your trial, at the mouth of your trouble or temptation, and then wait upon the Lord for the accompliſhment of the promiſe. Thou canſt (Chriſtian) be brought into no condition, but there is ſome promiſe in the new Covenant that doth ſute thy tryal, whatever it be; there is no burthen laid upon thy back, but ſome promiſe ſutes the burthen; now you muſt ſingle out a promiſe ſutable to your preſent ſtate, and ſet that at the head of your tryal,& keep your eye there,waiting for the accompliſhment of the promiſe, and hereby your hearts will be raiſed up to glory,& rejoyce in the Lord alone. Suppoſe that you were in ſome conſiderable danger, ſingle out ſome Goſpel delivering promiſe, and ſet that at the head of your danger. Suppoſe Chriſtian that thou haſt ſome great burthen upon thy Spirit, ſingle out ſome Soul reviving promiſe, and ſet it at the head of thy burthen. Suppoſe that you have met with ſome extraordinary loſs, ſingle out ſome comforting, reviving promiſe, ſome pro-

miſe of ſupplies that Jeſus Chriſt hath made, and ſet that at the door where your comfort went out; and keep your eye upon the promiſe of your ſtate, and the promiſe of your preſent condition, and wait upon the Lord for its accompliſhment, and by this means your hearts will in a little time come to be raiſed, and you will ſee a new ſupply ready to come in upon your empty condition.

14. Again; *Propoſe the communicable Attributes of Chriſt to your view, as under an unchangeable reconciliation and obligation unto you.* My friends, if Chriſt be yours, then all Chriſt is yours; when Chriſt gave you an intereſt in himſelf, he made over all himſelf to you; all the Attributes of his eternal glorious nature, they are engaged to you, they are reconciled to you, and they are under an expreſs Goſpel Covenant obligation for you. Now, propoſe theſe, and keep them in your view. Conſider, the Power of Jeſus Chriſt is under engagement for you. Conſider, the Wiſdom of Chriſt Jeſus is engaged to you; I ſpeak to every Believer in particular; for Chriſt makes over himſelf as fully to one Believer, as if he had but one Believer to make over himſelf unto. The Faithfulneſs of Chriſt Jeſus is engaged to you; the Love and the Grace of Chriſt Jeſus is engaged to you. Now Chriſtians, if you would come to rejoyce in Chriſt, then often conſider of theſe; propoſe theſe Attributes as under a ſpecial unchangeable Covenant-reconciliation and obligation to you; and conſider alſo how much there is in every property of his Nature; do but conſider how much there is in the Power of Chriſt, how much there is in the Love of Chriſt, how much there is in the Grace of Chriſt, how much there is in the Wiſdom

of

of Chriſt. Chriſtians, there is a fountain in every Attribute of Chriſt; there is a fountain of Power in Chriſt's Attribute of Power; and there is a fountain of Love in Chriſt's Attribute of Love; and there is a fountain of Grace in Chriſt's Attribute of Grace, and theſe fountains they are ſet open for you, Chriſtians; do but ſee then, how many fountains you have to go unto; you complain of want and emptineſs, that you have nothing; why here are full fountains to go unto; all theſe ſet open at all times for your relief; do but propoſe theſe (Chriſtians) to your conſideration, and your hearts will ſoon ſally out to rejoyce in the Lord.

15. In the laſt place; *If you would come to live by Faith upon the Lord Jeſus in all conditions, then reckon that your All is in Chriſt, and is alwaies ſure in Chriſt, though ſome outward comforts of your condition are coming and going.* Jeſus Chriſt is the poſſeſſor of your bleſſedneſs; your bleſſedneſs is not in your own hand, nor in the hands of a ſtranger, but in the hands of Chriſt; and the outward comforts of your condition are not your portion, (Chriſtians) they are not your All, but your All it lies in Chriſt, and when you have loſt an Eſtate, your All is ſtill ſure in the hands of Chriſt: When you have loſt a friend, and loſt a relation, your All is ſtill in the hands of Chriſt untouched; there 'tis, and 'tis alwaies ſure in the hand where 'tis lodged. Now, do but reckon that your comforts lye here, and that the Lord is the keeper and poſſeſſor of all your hopes, of all your bleſſings and bleſſedneſſes, of all your comforts and conſolations, of your whole treaſure, and your Souls will come to be drawn out after Chriſt to a rejoycing in him. Says the Apoſtle in

Col. 3. 11. *But Chriſt is All, and in All.* He ſums up all in a few words; all is in Chriſt; why then, you that have an intereſt in Chriſt, reckon that your All lies there, and then will your Souls be enlarged to look towards him.

And *I* might add unto this for a cloſe, That you ſhould look up unto the Lord the Father, in the ſenſe of your weakneſs in Faith, or want of Faith, to encreaſe your Faith, or to give you Faith. The Diſciples they went unto Chriſt, *Luke* 17. 5. and ſaid, *Lord encreaſe our Faith.* So Chriſtians, you ſhould do; 'tis an evil day, a trying day; 'tis by Faith only that you will come to ſtand; and 'tis Faith that will keep up your ſpirits: O pray unto the Lord that he would encreaſe your Faith! Pray for the encreaſe of this grace above all, and be earneſt with him, that he who hath been the Author, would be the promoter of your Faith. And for your encouragement, Chriſtians, let me tell you, that the more you believe in Chriſt Jeſus, the more,

1. In the firſt place *you will glorifie Chriſt*; every act of Faith glorifies Chriſt Jeſus; it doth glorifie his Fulneſs, it glorifies his Alſufficiency, it glorifies his Advancement and Enthronement at the right hand of the Father; it glorifies him in his Goſpel-Offices, as he is intruſted with the Fulneſs of all grace for you. Nay,

2. *Believing in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth engage Jeſus Chriſt to come in for your help.* Every act of Faith doth not only glorifie him, but engage him; it will awaken his Power, and cauſe him to ariſe and open his hand, and give out more liberally and freely: He ſays therefore unto

to his Servants many times, *According to your Faith be it unto you.* Nay,

3. *This living upon Jeſus Chriſt is the only way to make your lives comfortable in this world.* What had this Prophet to comfort his heart with, but only this, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, reſting upon him alone? The Figg-tree, that was withered, and his creature-comforts were gone; emptineſs and nothingneſs was before him; well, ſays he, *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* Behold, this it was that made his condition comfortable; why Chriſtians, you will never have comfort in your own ſpirits under a loſs, under a croſs, and in a time of temptation, if you have not Faith upon Chriſt Jeſus, and there fix your Souls. Nay, let me add,

4. In the fourth and laſt place; *That hereby you ſhall have confirmation, and eſtabliſhment, and ſettlement, in the greateſt ſhakings of providence that may be brought upon your condition.* And therefore O Chriſtians! let me in the winding up of all once more call upon you to live upon, and to glory in Chriſt Jeſus alone: As to all your comforts in this world, you cannot promiſe your ſelves they ſhall abide with you; God may empty you from veſſel to veſſel, till he have taken all theſe away; but now there is enough in a naked Jeſus to take comfort in; there is enough in Jeſus Chriſt alone for you to glory in. O come and draw your comforts from Chriſt, and do not draw them from the creature; do not draw them from ſecondary helps, but draw them from the fountain; do not ſit down at the ſtreams, but away to the fountain, to the Ocean that is alwaies full. In every ſtrait

have your eye upon Jesus; in every cross keep your eye upon Jesus; in every loss keep your eye upon Jesus; under every strait and trial have recourse to Jesus, and acquaint your selves more with him, that you may be in the Prophets frame here, *To rejoyce in the Lord, and to joy in the God of your Salvation.*

7 AP 53

THE

THE SAINTS Hope in Heaven:

In one Sermon.

Together with

Freedom from Condemnation in Chriſt Jeſus.

Diſcovered in Two Sermons, Preached *Octob.* 2. 1681. being the laſt that were Preached.

By *Robert Aſty*, late Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt in *Norwich*.

Rom. 8. 33. *It is God that juſtifieth.*
V. 34 *Who is he that condemneth?*

LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Snowden* for *Edward Giles*, Bookſeller in *Norwich*, near the Market-place. 1683.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE HOPE OF THE Saints in Heaven.

Jan. y. 7

Coloſ. 1. 5.

For the Hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Goſpel.

THis holy Apoſtle being in bonds for the ſake of Chriſt, underſtanding by *Epaphras*, that this Church (with whom he had taken much pains in the Lord) was in danger to be carried off from the purity and ſimplicity of the Goſpel, by ſome Seducers and falſe teachers, that would ſet up the abrogated inſtitutions of *Moſes*, with the inſtitutions of Chriſt, makes it his

his buſineſs to confirm them in the faith that they had received; after the inſcription, and ſalutation, the Apoſtle gives thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for what he had done for this people, he declares how much they were upon his heart, he could not ceaſe praying for them, and he rejoyced in their faith, and in their love, as you may ſee, *v.* 3, 4. *We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, praying alwaies for you, ſince we heard of your faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and of the love which you have to all the Saints*; and he ſpeaks of their hope in this 5th verſe, which ſaies he, *is laid up for you in Heaven*, by hope he doth not mean the grace of hope, as 'tis ſometimes to be taken in the Scripture, but he means the object of hope, or the thing hoped for, as ſometimes hope is to be underſtood, as in *Gal.* 5. 5. *For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteouſneſs by faith.* And *Titus* 2. 13. *Looking for that bleſſed hope*; So as the hope that he ſpeaks of, which is laid up in Heaven, is Heaven itſelf, and the glory and bleſſedneſs of it, that did belong unto them that had laid hold upon Jeſus, and upon eternal life in laying hold upon Jeſus. There are ſome to make out the dependence of theſe words with the preceding, do thus underſtand them; we give thanks unto God for your faith, and for your love, which is an evidence that you have a hope which is laid up in Heaven for you. Some others thus, we are rejoyced in your faith, and in your love, which you have received, and wherein ye ſtand faſt, for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven.

Some

Some others they understand the Apostle, expressing in the fourth verse, the causes and grounds of his giving thanks to God for them, and rejoycing on their account, and that is their faith and their love, which are illustrated in the fifth verse, both in the final cause, and also in instrumental cause; the final cause is Heaven, and the blessedness thereof which their faith and their love will issue its self in; the instrumental cause is the word of the truth of the Gospel by which faith and love have been wrought in them; and by which they were making meet for the heavenly inheritance. It is only a short discourse that I intend upon the words.

The Proposition from the words is this;

Doct. *That the Saints have a hope which is laid up in Heaven for them.* They have the glory and the blessedness of Heaven to feed, and to feast their expectations upon, whilest they are here. There is a world beyond this world, where the Saints have their treasure, where their great estate, and their inheritance lyeth. Some things they have here, but truly as the Apostle saies, 1 *Cor.* 15. 19. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*; if that there were nothing more then is to be enjoyed here, if they had not something in reserve to mend their condition, they were poorly on't, saies Christ, *John* 16. 33. *In the world ye shall have tribulation.* The Saints have nothing but sorrows, tryals, temptations, troubles, and afflictions here: But there is a glo-

ry

ry which remains, a glory that is in reſerve, that is to be revealed, that is another manner of inheritance then what is poſſeſſed and enjoyed by them here, *Col.* 3. 4. *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* The life of the Saints is a hidden life, God hath hid it from the world; he hath hid their eſtate, he hath hid their riches, he hath hid their glory from the world, they do not know what they are born and entitled to; but when Chriſt who is our life, ſhall appear, then ſhall we alſo appear with him in glory, as for the men of the world you may ſee all they have, for they have their All here. All the portion that God intends to give them, it is poſſeſt by them here, and therefore they are called *men, which have their portion in this life, Pſal.* 17. 14. And thus 'tis ſaid of the rich man in the Parable, *Luke* 16. 25. *That he received his good things in this life.* And *Abraham* ſaid, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receiveſt thy good things, thou hadſt thy portion, and thy All here, all the comfort, and all the peace, and all the honour, and all the riches, and all the plenty that even God intends to beſtow upon wicked men, they have it here, but now, beſides all that the Saints have here, they have a hope that is laid up for them in Heaven. They can look beyond, and over things that are ſeen, unto thoſe things that are not ſeen, that is, with a carnal eye, they can look from preſent things that are periſhing, unto ſpiritual things that are eternal, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *Whileſt we look not, ſaies the Apoſtle at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen, for the things which are*

ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal. We look at thoſe things that are not ſeen, at the unſeen things of another world, and *Rom.* 5. 2. *We have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.* We have (ſaies he) peace with God now, which is ſomething of Heaven let down into our hearts, but this is not all, but we rejoyce in hope of the glory of God; and *Rom.* 8. 17, 18. *Being Children we are heirs, heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Chriſt*; and ſaies he, there is a glory that ſhall be revealed, that all the ſufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with it, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *There is laid up for me a Crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his appearing.* Now ſaies he, that I have fought the good fight, now that I have finiſhed my courſe, now that I am come to the end of my journey, now that I am a going out of the world, and leaving all that I have here, there is a Crown of righteouſneſs which is in reſerve for me, that is juſt ready to be ſet upon my head; and 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, which fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for you*; It is not known what a Saint is, whileſt he is here in this world, nor yet what a Saint hath; what he hath in reverſion, what he is called to, and what he ſhall be put into the poſ-

poſſeſſion of, 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

In ſpeaking to this Propoſition, we ſhall ſhew you what Hope the Saints have laid up in Heaven for them. A few particulars we ſhall alittle glance upon for the help of your Faith by the way. But what the Hope of a Saint is, which is laid up in Heaven for him, is that which no man upon Earth is able to tell you. The Apoſtle tells us, 2 *Cor.* 2. 9. *That eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love him.* And the Apoſtle *Paul* was mounted up into the third Heavens, and when he came down, he tells us that the glory that was there, and the high and bleſſed enjoyments that are there, they were unſpeakable, he was not able to utter them, 2 *Cor.* 12. 4. *He was caught up into Paradiſe, and heard unſpeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter*; unſpeakable words, unutterable words; he was not able to utter them when he was come down again. He ſays at the 3d verſe, Whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell, but when he was come down again, he was not able to tell what he heard, and what he ſaw, when he was in the tranſport; But yet there is ſomething that the Word of Truth hath made known to us, for the reviving of our ſpirits, and the ſtrengthening of our hope whilſt we are in our Journey; and ſome of thoſe things I ſhall briefly lay before you. As,

First, *In Heaven the Saints ſhall have the perfection of all grace.* Here they have grace, but grace

is

is under-age; grace is in a great deal of weakneſs; grace is mixed with a great deal of corruption, that is, there is a great deal of ſin in the heart with grace; they are not all grace; grace doth not ſtand alone; grace is not in its full ſtrength; grace here is ſo low, and ſo little, ſo born down, and ſo often overtopt with corruption, as that it can hardly be ſeen by another, it can hardly be diſcerned by themſelves: That a Child of God is oftentimes at a loſs to know what to make of his condition; he knows not whether he hath any grace or no. Says Chriſt, *Matth.* 14.31. *O thou of little faith! wherefore didſt thou doubt?* The ſame may be ſaid to us all, O ye of little faith! O ye of little love! O ye of little patience! O ye of little humility! O ye of little ſelf-denial! grace is in a great deal of weakneſs here; grace indeed lieth under a growing promiſe, and they that have received but a little, receive it as the earneſt of a great deal, but they have only the earneſt here: But now when they come in Heaven, there is perfection; all their graces are put into perfect ſtrength; there will be no weakneſs in their love to God; there will be no ſhort comings in their ſubmiſſion to the will of God; but in that heavenly ſtate, the Saints are all advanced unto a heavenly ſtature, even unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt, *Eph.* 3 13. *till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.* And *Eph.* 5. 27. *That* (ſays he) *he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.* There will be no weakneſs, no imperfection in the

new

new man, but you ſhall be in your full grown ſtate in Heaven, immediately upon your tranſlation; and therefore the Souls of Juſt men entring into Heaven, are ſaid to be in a perfect ſtate, *Heb.* 12. 23. *To the general Aſſembly and Church of the firſt born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the ſpirits of Juſt men made perfect.* Here you are glad to receive now a little, and then a little, and to be adding by degrees: But there, grace ſhall be ſo compleat, as there ſhall be no room for a further degree, nor for a higher improvement.

2. *The Saints have a hope laid up in Heaven, of the glorification of theſe vile bodies.* Our bodies are now full of corruption, they are earthly bodies, and they are a great clog and a hinderance unto a ſpiritualized Soul; but there ſhall come a change upon them, 1 *Cor.* 15.42,43. *So alſo is the reſurrection of the dead; It is ſown in corruption, it is raiſed in incorruption; It is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed in glory.* Ver. 44. *It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body. It is ſown in corruption:* Many are the corrupting diſeaſes that our fleſh is expoſable to, whilſt we live; and ſuch infections ſometimes ſeize upon the body, as do ſeparate Lovers and acquaintance far from them; but to be ſure, at death, corruption that ſeizes the body, and makes it ſo loathſom, that near relations cannot bear one another. *Abraham* cries out, O! *Bury my dead out of my ſight*; and yet ſhe was the Wife of his boſom, that was bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh, to whom he wanted no love; yet ſays he, *Bury my dead out of my ſight. It is ſown in diſhonour*, and indeed it lives ſo, for much of the glory, and beauty, and fairneſs of the body of man that was at firſt beſtowed upon him,

him, is loſt. But all the ſcarrs, and all the blemiſhes, and all the diſfigurements of our bodies, even all the effects of ſin, ſhall at once be done away, that that which is ſown in diſhonour, *ſhall be raiſed in glory*; and that which is ſown in *weakneſs*, ſhall be raiſed *in power*; and that which is ſown a *natural body*, ſhall be raiſed a *ſpiritual body*; it ſhall be ſpiritual in its temperature, conſtitution and complexion; it ſhall be ſpiritual in all its operations. It ſhall be raiſed to glory, and all the robes of mortality, and all the raggs of its vileneſs, they ſhall be left behind. *Lazarus*, when he roſe out of the grave, he aroſe with all his grave-cloths about him, and he came with them out of his grave, becauſe he was to return again, *Joh.* 11.44. *And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave-cloths*; Jeſus ſaith to them, *Looſe him, and let him go.* The grave had not done with him: This was not the bleſſed Reſurrection that was under promiſe, but he came out of the grave to return again; but now Jeſus Chriſt, when he aroſe out of the grave, he aroſe to return no more, and he left all his grave-cloths behind him, *Joh.* 20. 6,7. *Then cometh* Simon Peter, *and went into the Sepulchre, and ſeeth the Linnen-cloths, and the Napkin that was about his head.* The Grave-cloths, the Napkin, and all that he had about him, was all left behind, becauſe he was to return no more. Now Jeſus he aroſe as the firſt fruits of the Saints, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20. *But now is Chriſt riſen from the dead, and become the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept.* So as you may ſee in the Reſurrection of Chriſt what ſhall be unto the Saints in their Reſurrection: They ſhall leave all the cloths of their diſhonour, and of corruption and mortality behind

them. And *Phil.* 3. 20,21. *Theſe vile bodies of ours ſhall be changed, and made like to the glorious body of Chriſt.. Who ſhall change our vile bodies,* bodies full of corruption, full of weakneſs, bodies in ſo much diſhonour, they ſhall be changed, and ſhall be faſhioned like to the glorious body of Chriſt. And *Rom.* 8. 23. *And not only they, but our ſelves alſo who have the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies.* So that this is another part of the hope that is laid up in Heaven for the Saints, the glorification of their vile bodies. We ſhall have part of that glory and honour upon our bodies, that the Father did beſtow upon that body which he prepared for his Son, when he took our nature: And truly the body of Jeſus Chriſt in Heaven is the moſt glorious creature that is there; and it is a glory which the Saints ſhall admire for ever; they ſhall not only admire it in Chriſt, but admire it in themſelves, as they alſo ſhall be made partakers of it.

3. *The Saints have a Hope laid up for them of an everlaſting Reſt.* Here is no Reſt in this world, it is full of troubles and toſſings to and fro, like a Ship that is at Sea in a ſtorm; but now in Heaven there is Reſt; Reſt from all the troubles of men, Reſt from all the troubles of Satan, Reſt from all the troubles of ſin; ſorrow ſhall flee from them: *All tears ſhall be wiped from their eyes, Rev.* 21. 4. I ſhall not here tell you how far the Saints may be made partakers of this that is here promiſed, on this ſide Heaven; but to be ſure, 'tis true of Heaven it ſelf. Glad would a Saint be to get into a corner where he might ſit down and be at reſt; but if he take up in this

this condition, he is preſently diſturbed; if he go into another condition, he finds his troubles follow him; his quarters are continually broken up; he can never be at reſt, but one diſquiet follows another, and one trouble takes another by the heels. But in Heaven there the Saints ſhall be taken into an everlaſting Reſt, 2 *Theſ.* 1.7. *And to you who are troubled reſt with us.* He cheers up theſe *Theſſalonians* to whom he writes, under all the troubles that they met withal from men and Devils, and all their enemies in their way, that were continually diſquieting of their ſpirits; Well, ſays he, Cheer up, to you who are troubled reſt with us. He was abundant in labours, and abundant in ſorrows and ſufferings, but he comforted himſelf with this, that there was a Reſt that remained for him; and not for me only, ſays he, but for you alſo; *reſt with us*: You ſhall come into the ſame Reſt with us. Miniſters and People that are faithful in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall all come into the ſame Reſt, a Reſt that none of the troublers ſhall be able to diſturb, *Rev.* 14.13. *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.* The labours and the pains that you take here, they are very many: We were driven by God into this condition, in the ſweat of our faces to eat our bread; Well, but this is but for this life: You have a Hope that is laid up in Heaven for you, of a bleſſed and a glorious Reſt, wherein you ſhall have freedom from all your labours; you ſhall have freedom from all the diſturbances and preſſures that you have here.

4. *There is a fulneſs of Joy that is laid up in Heaven for all Believers.* Says the Prophet, *Iſa.* 66. 11.

That ye may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of her conſolation, that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. If that there be ſuch a time a coming, wherein this may be true of the Saints here upon Earth, it will be much more ſo in Heaven; for Heaven will heighten all; it will heighten all your joy, and heighten all your comfort; and not only heighten the joy and comfort that you have, but that ſucceeding Saints ſhall have when the whole Earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; ſtill there ſhall be a diſproportion between Earth and Heaven. When the voice ſaith, Come up hither, that which follows is, *Enter into your Maſter's Joy*, *Matth.* 25. 21. Here the Lord, for the bearing up of the hearts of his People, ſends down a little joy into their ſpirits; he ſends down the Comforter unto them, and he comes, and now and then ſpeaks a reviving word; now and then he gives a drop of conſolation, and it may be it is upon the end of the Rod too, and this is counted a great matter; and truly it ſhould be ſo with us. But there is a hope of another manner of Joy, (or other meaſures) laid up in Heaven for you. Joy, it ſhall be the Air that the Saints ſhall breath in; it ſhall be the very Orb that they ſhall move in, the very Elements that they ſhall dwell in; their hearts cannot hold all; it ſhall be overflowing, it ſhall be round about them.

1. *The Joy that is laid up in Heaven for the Saints, it is that that ſhall be fully ſatisfying.* They ſhall have enough of it, they ſhall be filled with it to the full, ſo as there ſhall be no room for more, *Pſal.* 16. 11. *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life; in thy preſence is fulneſs of Joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures*

pleaſures for evermore. But ſhall the Saints have enough of this? yes, *Pſal.* 17.16. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs; I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs.* The Soul hath not its ſatisfaction here; when it hath a little, it is enlarged to bleſs God, but it hath not enough, it would have more ſtill; a little more communion with God: But in Heaven there is ſatisfaction to the full. *When I awake,* that is in the morning of the reſurrection, when this mortality is blown out of his eyes; when he comes to open his eyes in the other world, then *ſhall I be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.*

2. *The Joy that is laid up in Heaven is unmixed.* Here there is a mixture with your Joy, you have a little joy, and a great deal of ſorrow; you have a little peace, and a great deal of trouble; you have darkneſs with your light, and you have vexation and croſſes with your comforts: But in Heaven there is nothing to croſs, there is nothing to grieve, there is only joy, there is no mixture with your joy. It will be pure joy.

3. And thirdly; *That Joy that is laid up in Heaven will be permanent.* It is ſuch as you ſhall ſit down in, and that which you ſhall partake of to eternity. Here your joy is not only mixed with ſorrows, but it meets with great overwhelmings; it is coming and going; it is partaken of here at great uncertainties; but now in Heaven it will be alwaies the ſame.

4. *There is in Heaven laid up for you abſolute freedom, and full liberty of Soul in the Service of God.* Here 'tis not ſo, when the ſpirit is willing, the fleſh is weak; and how often are our hearts ready to die within us? The Spirit will not hold out; we can

hardly watch with Christ one hour; bodies tire and spirits tire; but now there will be a fulness of strength in Heaven, and there will be liberty of spirit, proportionable to all strength, and to all grace; the Soul will be in absolute freedom for God, and the body under an absolute freedom too, answerable unto all the freeness of the Soul; now the body is a great clog to the Soul; it is a great hinderance, that you cannot do for God, and you cannot lay out your selves for God as you would, but there will be no weariness in Heaven in your Spirits, though you shall serve night and day, world without end: the promise is, *Isaiah* 40. 31. *That they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk, and not be faint.* The Saints rejoyce as they can experience something of this here, but the fulness of this promise will be in Heaven, there you shall mount up indeed as with wings, there Soul and Body shall be in all liberty in the service of God. Now what would Saints give to have their Spirits in a freedom and full liberty for God but one day; O they would count it a corner of Heaven, if that they could have their Spirits set in full liberty for God but one of his daies, that they may serve God, and delight themselves fully in the service of God a whole day. But Sirs, in Heaven you shall be fully delighted in the service of God to eternity, all clogs shall be taken off from your Spirits.

5. *The Saints have a hope laid up in Heaven for them of an eternal abode in the glorious pal-*

lace

lace of their Father; here their dwelling is uncertain, they have no ſure dwelling place upon earth; their Landlords ſometimes warn them out of their Houſes, and command them to ſeek a new dwelling; ſometimes God turns them out of their Houſes, they may be driven out of their Houſes here by the Sword, they may be driven out by fire, but the Lord he hath choſen Heaven as the place of their perpetual reſidence, *Deut.* 1. 33. *Who went in the way before you to ſearch out a place.* The Lord went before *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs by Fire, and by the Cloud to ſearch out a place for his People, where they ſhould dwell: Jeſus the fore-runner that is entered into Heaven, he is gone before to ſearch out a place, to chooſe out a place, and to prepare a place for you, *John* 14, 2. *I go ſaith he to prepare a place for you*; and this place that Chriſt is gone to prepare, 'tis in the Fathers Houſe, there ſhall the Saints abode and dwelling be for ever; and there is none that ſhall ever turn them out of that Houſe, but to eternity they ſhall peaceably poſſeſs it.

6. *In Heaven ſhall be the conſummation of the Marriage between Chriſt and the believer*; here the Marriage is entered upon, Chriſt and the believing Soul they are betrothed together, as *Hoſea* 2. 19, 20. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever*; but the betrothment here is like a young man, when he betroths a Virgin, they live aſunder after they are betrothed, ſo Chriſt and your Souls live aſunder; you are betrothed here by grace, and you come together now and then in an ordinance, and now and then Chriſt lets

out of his heart unto you, and now and then you let out of your heart to Chriſt, and now and then Chriſt ſends you a token of his love, and a letter of his love, wherein he gives a manifeſtation of his love, but ſtill you are aſunder; but in Heaven the Marriage ſhall be conſummated, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. *While we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord,* and we live aſunder, but ſaies he, when we come to depart *we ſhall be with Chriſt, Phil.* 1. 23. *and we ſhall ever be with the Lord,* 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. This is a bleſſed day indeed, that will bring Jeſus Chriſt and your Souls together, never more to be ſeparated, never more to be at a diſtance, never to be out of the preſence of one another more. Communion with God it is ſweet now, and when Jeſus Chriſt lets out but a little of himſelf; O the Soul he cries out, evermore give me of this Bread. O ſaies he, that I were to go down no more, but this communion is clouded, and the ſenſe of it loſt, but when we come to be diſſolved, and to enter into Heaven, then ſaies he, *we ſhall be with the Lord.*

7. Again; *The Saints have a hope laid up for them in Heaven, of enjoying fellowſhip and ſociety with all ſanctified ones in Chriſt Jeſus:* Heaven will bring all the Saints together, and keep them in an eternal communion. There are two things that have reſpect to the Saints in Heaven.

1. *They ſhall have a full knowledge one of another.* And,

2. *They ſhall have communion one with another.*

1. *They ſhall have knowledge one of another*: There ſhall be no ſtrangers in Heaven; indeed it is queſtioned by ſome whether the Saints ſhall know

know one another in Heaven; but truly it is out of queſtion with me, for the Saints ſhall be all of one Society, they ſhall be all of one Company, they ſhall be all of one intire body, and ſurely it is inconſiſtent with the glory of that ſtate, for one member to have no knowledge of another; if that you be of a company here upon earth, let the company be 40, 50, 100, or 500, by abode together, and by converſe, and by reſidence together, and meeting together, you come to have a knowledge one of another; and can it be thought that an eternal abode, together in Heaven, won't give you the knowledge one of another; but the Scripture ſeems very plain and clear in this caſe, in *Mat.* 17. 3, 4. *Jeſus there taketh* Peter, James, *and* John, *and goes up into an high mountain, and there he was transfigured before them*; and indeed it was a little corner of Heaven that he carried them into there; and he brings down *Moſes and Elias, and Peter preſently knew them*, and he ſaid unto Jeſus, *Lord it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt let us make here three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for* Moſes, *and one for* Elias: *Peter* had never ſeen *Moſes* and *Elias*, for they were dead many years before he was born, and yet as ſoon as ever they did appear with Chriſt, *Peter* knew them, this is *Moſes*, and this is *Elias*. Sirs, the knowledge of the Saints won't be decreaſed, but heightned in Heaven; ſome of you it may be lye under mourning of Spirit for ſome of your relations that are gone to Heaven; well, wait but a little while, and you ſhall know them again; But let me tell you, you ſhall not know them af-

ter

ter a carnal manner, but after a ſpiritual manner, according to that ſtate, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the fleſh.* Chriſt ſhall not be known hereafter after the fleſh, and when you come in Heaven, you won't know one another after the fleſh, yet in a ſpiritual manner you ſhall know one another, Parents ſhall know their Children, and Children ſhall know their Parents in a ſpiritual manner, you ſhall know thoſe Servants of God that have taken pains with you here, and helped your Souls on to Heaven. Some of you often think it may be, of Reverend Mr. *Armitage*, that laboured with you in the Lord, and ſome of you remember Reverend Mr *Allen*, that was the Lords mouth unto you many years; you that have a hope laid up in Heaven for you, you ſhall follow them in your time and in your order, and know them again, and all the Servants of the Lord from one end of the world unto the other; you ſhall know thoſe that you have known, and you ſhall know thoſe that you have not known, you ſhall know *Moſes*, and *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and all the Patriarchs. And then;

2. *You ſhall know them ſo as to have communion with them, you ſhall ſit down* (which is a note of communion, *Mat.* 8. 11.) *with* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of Heaven*; indeed all your knowledge of the Saints, and all your fellowſhip with the Saints, it ſhall all be reſolved into the glorifying of God, ſo as God ſhall be uppermoſt in all, and you ſhall ſee God through all, and you ſhall triumph in God, and ſing praiſes to God through all; yet as glorified

Saints

Saints together, and as members of the ſame, body; ſo there will be a fellowſhip and communion together in the enjoyment of God, and communion with him.

8. *There is a hope which you have laid up for you in Heaven, of Gods being all in all to you*; in 1 Cor. 15. 18. *And when all things ſhall be ſubdued to him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* The diſpenſation that Chriſt hath now in his hand, in that he is the Lord of the world, and the government of it ſhall be laid down, when the whole body of believers ſhall be brought home, and all the election of Gods grace brought in; yet then ſhall Chriſt be glorious in the eyes of the Saints, but *God then ſhall be all in all*; that is, all believers ſhall be placed in the immediate preſence of God, where ſhall be the full diſplay of his glory upon them to all eternity, an immediate and powerful diſplay of the glory of the Divine Majeſty upon their Souls to eternity; here the Saints can ſee the face of God but in a glaſs, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *For now we ſee through a glaſs darkly*; it is but a dim glaſs that we have here to ſee God in, but then ſaies he, *face to face. Moſes* you know did importune the Lord that he might ſee his glory, *Exod.* 33. 18. ſaies the Lord at the 20 v. *Thou canſt not ſee my face, for there ſhall no man ſee me and live*; in thy preſent mortal ſtate, ſaies God, thou art not able to bear my immediate glory, but I will cauſe ſome of my goodneſs to paſs before thee, to ſatisfy thee for the preſent; So God he makes ſome diſcoveries of himſelf in the glaſs of

of ſome Goſpel-Inſtitution, but now in Heaven there is face to face, in the immediate preſence of the Lord, ever to behold his glory. Theſe are ſome of thoſe bleſſed things that are laid up for the Saints in Heaven, that their hopes and expectations ſhould be upon whilſt they are here.

Appl. I ſhall now make a little Application of this.

Uſe 1. If that the Saints have ſuch a Hope laid up for them in Heaven, *Then here you may ſee the difference between them and the men of this world, who are taken up with the good things that are here below.* They cry out, Who will ſhew us any good? They look for things that are ſeen, and that are pleaſing to the fleſh, and they look no further. O Sirs! how poorly provided are the men of the world, with all their hundreds, and with all their thouſands, when they have all their good things here, and they have nothing to come? Do not you ſee that the portion of God's People is another manner of portion than the portion of the wicked in all their plenty and fulneſs? Says the Prophet, *Jer.* 10. 16. *The portion of* Jacob *is not like them.* So the portion of a Saint is not like the portion of a Sinner. Though God hath not made you rich in this world, and hath not given you the fulneſs and the honours that the men of this world do poſſeſs, if you have a Hope laid up in Heaven for you, hath not he dealt better by you? *Hagar* and her Child they are packt away out of the family with a Loaf of bread, and a bottle of water, and that was their portion and allowance, when the Inheritance was reſerved for *Iſaac*, *Gen.* 21. 14. So the Lord he gives the good things of this life unto wicked men; he throws

throws them in common unto them, and they are ſent away out of his preſence with them, and when the Loaf is done, and the Bottle is empty, they have nothing more to betake themſelves unto; then they muſt ſit down in eternal miſery. Now under all the ſhort commons that the Saints have here, they have a Hope that is laid up in Heaven. You ſee then that the portion of a Saint is not like the portion of a worldly man.

Uſe 2. *See here the dignity and the honour that the Lord hath put upon all his Saints.* The worth of a Child of God is not known here; like his Lord and Maſter, he is deſpiſed, and contemned, and reproached; they are men and women of ſcorn and contempt, of ſorrow and bitterneſs in the world; but there is honour that the Lord puts upon them, though the world count them the off-ſcouring of all things, as thoſe Worthies were, of whom the world was not worthy, *Heb.* 11.36,37,38. *They had trials of cruel mockings and ſcourgings; yea moreover, of bonds and impriſonment. They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword; they wandered about in Sheep-ſkins and Goat-ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy.* And who were theſe? Theſe were Heirs of Heaven, Children of the Promiſe; theſe were perſons that had a Hope laid up for them in Heaven, and in all their diſgraces and contempts here, were waiting for a glory that was to be revealed. Great honour hath the Lord put upon his Saints, in the Hope that is laid up in Heaven for them.

Uſe 3. *If that there be a Hope which the Saints have laid up for them in Heaven, a Hope that will*

hold,

hold, then all of you look into your ſelves, and examine your Hopes, and ſee that you be not miſtaken in them. There is a Hope that will ſtand you in no ſtead. We read of the Hope of the Hypocrite, that is like unto the giving up of the Ghoſt, which is but as the Spider's web, he ſhall truſt to it, and it ſhall deceive him. O Sirs! look well to your Hopes that you be not miſtaken; conſider whether your Hope be laid up in Heaven, whether you have caſt Anchor within the Vail; examine your ſtate and condition, to ſee how 'tis with you, leſt at laſt you ſhould miſs of all this glory that the Saints hope for; and in the examination of your ſelves, look to theſe two things which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in the verſe before the Text: One is Faith, and the other is Love.

Firſt, *Look to your Faith,* and ſee whether you have made a true cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt. True Faith it unbottoms the Soul from all things on this ſide Chriſt, and founds the Soul upon Chriſt himſelf. Now if you would know whether your Hope be good, ſee whether your Faith be ſound, have you taken the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for yours? for your Prophet, and for your Prieſt, and for your King? have you made a cloſe with him? and have you reſigned up your ſelves unto him? examine your ſelves about your believing.

Secondly, *Examine your ſelves about your Love.* When Jeſus Chriſt came to put *Peter* upon the examination of himſelf, ſays he, *Simon Peter, loveſt thou me? Simon,* loveſt thou me more than theſe? Doſt thou love me more than all the world beſides? that is Chriſt's meaning, more than his Nets, more than all his employments in the world. So, hath God and Jeſus Chriſt the uppermoſt room in thy heart?

heart? are they principal in thy affections? are they more to thee than all the world beſides? doſt thou love God, and love Jeſus Chriſt more than all? Examine your ſelves by your Faith, and by your Love, and take heed that you do not take up in a falſe Hope that will deceive you.

Uſe 4. Again; *If that you have a Hope that is laid up in Heaven for you, then comfort your ſelves with this Hope, under all the diſcomfortures that you meet with-al in the world.* The Apoſtle he makes this uſe of the point, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 18. *Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words*; With what words? *That* (ſays he) *we ſhall meet the Lord in the Air, and ſo ſhall be ever with him.* Comfort one another, and comfort your own hearts with theſe words. You meet with many loſſes here, and you meet with many temptations here, and you meet with many afflictions here, trial upon trial, one following another; well, under all comfort your ſelves with the Hope that is laid up in Heaven for you, and ballance all your trials and temptations with the Hope that is in Heaven. And

Uſe 5. In the laſt place; *You that have a Hope laid up in Heaven for you, ſee that you walk anſwerable to your Hope.* This is expected of you, as the Apoſtle tells you, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 12. *That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his Kingdom and glory.* See that you walk worthy of the Hope that you have received. Have you a Hope laid up in Heaven for you, of ſuch great things as we have mentioned, a Hope ever to be with the Lord? then carry it in a way correſpondent to theſe Hopes, in raiſed frames, breathings and longings of heart after God. The Hopes of an eternal enjoyment

enjoyment of God in the world to come, ſhould fill us with deſires after the enjoyment of God here, in thoſe means, and according to thoſe waies in which he hath promiſed to let out of himſelf to his People. You ſhould be continually preſsing after the enjoyment of God mediately, who have the Hopes of the eternal enjoyment of God immediately. And, ſays the Apoſtle, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. *He that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himſelf even as he is pure.* If you have ſuch a Hope, then teſtifie it by laying ſiege to corruption, and by ſeeking to mortifie the body of ſin and death, that you bear about you, and correſpond with your Hopes in preſsing after holineſs, and a growth in all grace; for he that hath this Hope, and he that hath the Promiſe of theſe things, will be perfecting Holineſs in the fear of God. Make it your buſineſs therefore to grow in grace, and to advance in all Holineſs, that ſo you may abound, and that yet more and more in the work of the Lord.

Chriſtians

Chriſtians Freedom FROM Condemnation in Chriſt.

Romans 8. 1.

There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.

THIS Chapter is (as one calls it) the Magazine of a Chriſtian's comfort; it is the Cabinet where many Jewels are lockt up, the Ship where much of his Treaſure is imbarqued. The Apoſtle gives out comfort upon comfort unto Believers here.

1. In the firſt part of the Chapter he endeavours to comfort them under the afflictive and diſcouraging ſenſe that they had of the remaining corruption that did annoy and peſter them every day, ſhewing that it was pardoned and done away out of the ſight of God.

2. He endeavours to comfort them under all their trials, tribulations and afflictions, that were

many,and to be many in this world;and ſhews them that there was a weight of glory in reſerve, that would more than ballance them all.

3. He alſo endeavours to comfort them againſt their fears of falling away,or of God's caſting them off, ſhewing of them, that nothing ſhall ſeparate them from the love of Chriſt. And in the cloſe of the Chapter Faith breaks out into an high act, and he is able to triumph over all in this world, and all the Principalities of Hell and Darkneſs that were engaged againſt him, ſhewing that in Chriſt Jeſus he was (and all thoſe in his ſtate and condition were) more than Conquerors through him that had loved them.

In the firſt verſe you have a heart-reviving Propoſition laid down; *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* In the following verſes, you have the confirmation of this Propoſition; *For* (ſays he) *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of ſin and death.* In *ver.* 9. he makes application of all unto thoſe in Chriſt Jeſus to whom he had written: *But ye* (ſays he) *are not in the fleſh, but in the ſpirit, if ſo be the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* All you that have the Spirit of God,you are not in the fleſh, but in the Spirit; and therefore there is no condemnation to you; and he propoſes it in ſuch general terms, as that all who have the Spirit, may take it up,and make application of the comfort thereof to their own Souls. The Aſſertion that he lays down in the Text is, *no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus:* Or a Concluſion that is drawn from the whole Doctrine of our Juſtification in and by the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, of which he had treated

treated in the preceeding Chapters of the Epistle. Now this he concludes from it, that being accepted in Christs righteousnes, and being in that justified before God, *there is now no condemnation for us*; so as you have in the words,

1. This assertion laid down, *that there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*

2. *A Mark and Character given, whereby we may come to know whether we are those to whom there is no condemnation*; that is, such (saies he) *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

In the Proposition or assertion, you may take notice,

1. Of the Subjects, and they are such *as are in Christ*

2. Of the Predicate, and that is, *there is no Condemnation to them.* Some there are that make our being in Christ Jesus our vocation, and they construe our Non-condemnation, our justification, and our walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit, to set forth our sanctification. *Condemnation*, it is the doom or sentence of a just and righteous Judge against an offender. Now *Non-condemnation*, it is the contrary hereunto; that is, to be acquitted, to be discharged, to have the sentence of death revoked and taken off, and this is that that God doth for all those that are in Christ Jesus; he revokes the sentence that was gone out against them. There is in the Gospel a cancelling of our law obligation to die; the Gospel that brings in life, and removes the death that the law threatned and denounced against us; and so the Proposition from the first part of the verse is this.

Doct. *That all thoſe that are in Chriſt, they are acquitted, abſolved, and diſcharged by God.*

There is now ſaies he, *no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* No condemnation from God, no condemnation in Heaven for them; God the Father, that is in Chriſt a Father of Mercies, and a Father of Forgiveneſſes, he comes, and forgives, and diſcharges them. There are 3 Courts as I may ſo ſay; there is *the Court of Heaven*, there is *the Court of Conſcience*, and there are *the Courts of Men.* Now a Child of God may be ſentenced in the two latter, and yet acquitted and cleared in the former; he may be condemning himſelf, he may be drawing up charges againſt himſelf, he may write nothing but bitterneſs againſt himſelf, when he is acquitted before God, he may be accuſed and condemned by Men; Jeſus Chriſt was ſo counted a Sinner, numbred amongſt Tranſgreſſours, and yet the beloved Son of God all the while; but yet there is a time a coming, when all thoſe that are diſcharged in Gods Court in Heaven ſhall be cleared, both in the Court of their own conſciences; and alſo before the whole world. We ſhall obſerve this method in our brief handling of it.

1. *To ſhew you the truth of it from Scripture.*

2. *To give you the properties of this diſcharge that is given out by God to believers.*

3. *The ground upon which God proceeds in the diſcharge.*

4. *The time when the Soul is taken into this priviledge, and hath the diſcharge given out to him.*

And then the *Application.*

1. Scrip-

1. Scripture clears this; *That there is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt*: they are abſolved, they are diſcharged by God. Believers are ſo, but as for all thoſe that are in their Sins, they are under the ſentence of condemnation; it hangs over them, and it follows them whereever they go, *John* 3. 18. *He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already*; really condemned, he hath the ſentence really denounced againſt him, he is really declared a dead man in the ſenſe of the law, as we ſay when the judge hath denounced ſentence of death againſt a Malefactor, he is a dead man, ſo every one in his ſins is a dead man, *he is condemned already*: There is indeed this difference between him, and one that is in Hell, he that is in Hell is condemned and executed; but the ſinner upon Earth is condemned and not executed, The Sinner in Hell is condemned and executed, and there remains no hope for him. The Sinner upon Earth, he is condemned, and yet there is hope, that comes in at the door of the Goſpel, which gives ſome probability, that if he will beſtir himſelf, the ſentence may be removed; the patience of God is exerciſed, and it is drawn out into a great length, and it is to lead the Sinner to repentance, *Rom.* 2. 4 *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* After the Sentence, God waits upon the Sinner, and will not ſuffer the law preſently to take hold, and to do its work: the hand of Juſtice that is held from ſmiting; the Sinner is not preſently

Doct. *That all thoſe that are in Chriſt, they are acquitted, abſolved, and diſcharged by God.*

There is now ſaies he, *no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* No condemnation from God, no condemnation in Heaven for them; God the Father, that is in Chriſt a Father of Mercies, and a Father of Forgiveneſſes, he comes, and forgives, and diſcharges them. There are 3 Courts as I may ſo ſay; there is *the Court of Heaven*, there is *the Court of Conſcience*, and there are *the Courts of Men.* Now a Child of God may be ſentenced in the two latter, and yet acquitted and cleared in the former; he may be condemning himſelf, he may be drawing up charges againſt himſelf, he may write nothing but bitterneſs againſt himſelf, when he is acquitted before God, he may be accuſed and condemned by Men; Jeſus Chriſt was ſo counted a Sinner, numbred amongſt Tranſgreſſours, and yet the beloved Son of God all the while; but yet there is a time a coming, when all thoſe that are diſcharged in Gods Court in Heaven ſhall be cleared, both in the Court of their own conſciences; and alſo before the whole world. We ſhall obſerve this method in our brief handling of it.

1. *To ſhew you the truth of it from Scripture.*

2. *To give you the properties of this diſcharge that is given out by God to believers.*

3. *The ground upon which God proceeds in the diſcharge.*

4. *The time when the Soul is taken into this priviledge, and hath the diſcharge given out to him.*

And then the *Application.*

1. Scrip-

1. Scripture clears this; *That there is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt*: they are abſolved, they are diſcharged by God. Believers are ſo, but as for all thoſe that are in their Sins, they are under the ſentence of condemnation; it hangs over them, and it follows them whereever they go, *John* 3. 18. *He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already*; really condemned, he hath the ſentence really denounced againſt him, he is really declared a dead man in the ſenſe of the law, as we ſay when the judge hath denounced ſentence of death againſt a Malefactor, he is a dead man, ſo every one in his ſins is a dead man, *he is condemned already*: There is indeed this difference between him, and one that is in Hell, he that is in Hell is condemned and executed; but the ſinner upon Earth is condemned and not executed, The Sinner in Hell is condemned and executed, and there remains no hope for him. The Sinner upon Earth, he is condemned, and yet there is hope, that comes in at the door of the Goſpel, which gives ſome probability, that if he will beſtir himſelf, the ſentence may be removed; the patience of God is exerciſed, and it is drawn out into a great length, and it is to lead the Sinner to repentance, *Rom.* 2. 4 *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* After the Sentence, God waits upon the Sinner, and will not ſuffer the law preſently to take hold, and to do its work: the hand of Juſtice that is held from ſmiting; the Sinner is not preſently

executed, and in the patience, in the forbearance, and long-ſuffering of God, there is a pardon that is tendered; and a way diſcovered, whereby the Sinner may come to get free from the doom that was upon him; but the ſentence that hangs over the head of every unbeliever, as *John* 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlaſting life, and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*; the wrath of God, that hangs over his head; it hangs over his head in that ancient ſentence that was denounced againſt man upon his firſt tranſgreſſion, *Gen.* 2. 17. *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die; or thou ſhalt die the death*: here is the ſentence, here is the doom, and God abideth by his word to this day; hereupon ſaies the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe, for it is written, curſed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them*; being under the works of the law, you are under the curſe, becauſe the broken law doth denounce a curſe againſt all the breakers of it; ſo as all thoſe that are unbelievers, all thoſe that are under the firſt Covenant, all thoſe that are in a ſtate of ſin before God, they are condemned already.

But now, all thoſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus, have this ſentence of death taken off, they are abſolved and diſcharged by the Lord, ſaies the Prophet, *Iſaiah* 38. 17. *For thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back*; It is ſpoken by God after the manner of men; when a man gives out the bond of another, and freely diſchargeth him of the

the Debt, the Bond is cancelled and thrown away; it is caſt behind his back for waſt-paper, never more to be made uſe of, the Debt never more to be brought into queſtion again, nor yet the Debtor upon the account of the Debt. Now (ſays he) thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back; thou haſt given me a diſcharge, that they ſhall no more lie againſt me, *Rev.* 2. 17. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna.* [*Manna*] of old was a type of Chriſt. The Apoſtle to the *Corinthians* clears it; Now (ſays he) he ſhall eat of the *hidden Manna* he ſhall feed upon Chriſt, every overcomer ſhall have communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt; and that is not all, but *I will give him a white ſtone.* The Lord in this expreſſion doth allude unto the Cuſtom that was amongſt the *Romans*; when a perſon upon his tryal was found guilty, he had a black ſtone given him in token of his condemnation; and he that was diſcharged and cleared, he had a white ſtone given him in token of his abſolution. Now, ſays he, *I will give him a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which none knows but he that receiveth it.* I will diſcharge him, ſays the Lord: Every overcomer, every one in Chriſt he hath a white ſtone given him by the Lord. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.*

2. We ſhall proceed to ſhew you *what are the properties of this diſcharge, that the Lord grants unto thoſe that are in Chriſt.*

Firſt, *It is a real diſcharge*: It is no imaginary thing. It is a real truth that the Apoſtle doth here affirm, *There is*, ſays he, *therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* The abſolution

of a Believer is as real as his ſinning was real, as his condemnation was real; he was really a ſinner, and he was really condemned, on the account of his ſin, and he is as really diſcharged. You have the word of the Lord for it. The ſame word of truth that tells us there is condemnation to every Unbeliever, tells us, that there is no condemnation to the Believer: But you have not only the Word of God for it, but you have your diſcharge under hand and ſeal: And therefore the Apoſtle tells us, that thoſe that believe, they are ſealed by the Spirit of the Lord. The Seal of the Spirit it is God's Seal, *Eph.* 1. 13. *In whom ye alſo truſted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Goſpel of your Salvation, in whom alſo after that you believed, ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of Promiſe.* And again, *Eph.* 4. 30. *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby you are ſealed to the day of Redemption.* He comes and gives you a ſealed pardon; he gives you the Seal of God's pardon upon your own hearts. And hence the Apoſtle ſpeaks with as much confidence as man can ſpeak upon a ſure teſtimony, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *We know that we are paſſed from death to life,* [*we know it*] ſays he. And *the Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirits that we are the Children of God, Rom.* 8. 16. There is a report and a teſtimony of the Spirit of God within; and there is by the work of the Spirit, and by the hand of the Spirit the diſcharge, and the work of God in the diſcharge ſealed upon the Soul of the Believer, ſo as he knows as really as he hath known that he was a ſinner, that he is diſcharged from his ſins: Though a perſon may be diſcharged, and not know it; for the Spirit of God doth not alwaies witneſs; the Spirit of God doth not alwaies ſeal:

Nay,

Nay, he may ſeal, and his Seal may be hid; he may make report, and give evidence, and this evidence may be loſt. Thoſe that have had the aſſurance of the pardon of their ſins, may loſe it again; or it may be ſome conſiderable time after the Soul hath been diſcharged, before he is able to read his diſcharge, but the Spirit of the Lord firſt or laſt will be a Witneſſer and Sealer to all thoſe that have their diſcharge, and they ſhall know it, and have the comfort of it. It is a real diſcharge.

Secondly, *It is a free diſcharge.* God doth all that he doth for his People *gratis*; there is nothing in them that hath procured and bought in the bleſſing at the hand of the Lord. But when he comes to diſcharge a Soul, he doth it for his own Names ſake: As *Iſa.* 43. 25. *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.* I will blot them out, ſays God, not for thy ſake, for thou haſt deſerved no ſuch thing at my hand; but I will blot them out for my own ſake: I do all that I do freely; and therefore ſays he, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his grace.* We are juſtified freely by the grace of God. When the ſinner deſerveth the full and the effectual execution of the ſentence that was denounced againſt him, then comes the Lord in a way of free and ſoveraign grace, and he diſcharges, and he pardons. As *Hoſ.* 14. 4. *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from them.* I will love them freely, and I will pardon freely, and I will paſs by, and I will forgive freely. So *Col.* 2. 13. *And you being dead, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all treſpaſſes.* So we read it: But it may be

be read, *Having freely forgiven you all treſpaſſes.* God freely forgives the treſpaſſes of his People, thoſe that he takes unto himſelf, and thoſe that are in Chriſt; therefore we are called upon by the Lord for to come unto him without money and without price. *Come ye,* ſays he, *that thirſt, to the waters, ſuch as have no money, ſuch as have no price come, and hearken diligently, and your Souls ſhall live, Iſa* 55. 1, 2, 3.

Thirdly, *It is a full diſcharge which the Lord grants unto his People*; a diſcharge that takes off all their ſins at once, *Pſal.* 103. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diſeaſes.* They are not hundreds and thouſands only, but all that you ſtand guilty of. All ſins of omiſſion, and all ſins of commiſſion; all ſins againſt the firſt Table, and all ſins againſt the ſecond Table, they are all at once forgiven; all ſecret ſins, and all open ſins; all heart-ſins, and all life-ſins, they are all forgiven. *Hezekiah,* he made Faith of this, *Iſa.* 38. 17. *For thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back.* The ſinner when he returns to God, comes with a load of ſins upon him, thouſands of thouſands of ſins he brings with him, a multitude of ſins, and the Lord when he receives this guilty Soul, he forgives them all at once. *Iſa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his waies, and the unrighteous man his thoughts*: Or, the man of wickedneſs, *and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon*: Or, as it may be read, *he will multiply pardons.* Sins have been multiplied in daies of ignorance, and multiplied in daies of knowledge multiplied againſt all the ſtrivings of the Spirit, multiplied under many tenders of Chriſt,

multi-

multiplied under many of the beſeechings of the Spirit, multiplied in the clear Light of a Goſpel-day: But, ſays he, this ſhall not keep off, for *I will abundantly pardon.* God's pardon ſhall be as extenſive as all his tranſgreſſions were: Hereupon ſays the Apoſtle, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* There is no ſin remaining to condemn him of all his repeated tranſgreſſions, of all the thouſands and ten thouſands that he is guilty of, there is no condemnation, not one ſin left upon the ſcore to condemn him. *V.* 33. *Who ſhall lay any thing unto the charge of God's Elect? it is God that juſtifieth.* Satan will heap up things againſt them, but there ſhall not condemn them; their own Conſciences may bring in Indictment after Indictment againſt them; but, ſays he, there is not any thing that ſhall ſtand in record againſt them, not any thing that ſhall be laid to their charge, to condemn them; not any of their ſins, be they never ſo ſmall, not any of their ſins, be they never ſo great, that ſhall remain againſt them: *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect* when God juſtifies? Whereupon ſays the Prophet, *Jer.* 50. 20. *The iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reſerve.* Their iniquity ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none found; why? becauſe the pardon of God reacheth every one. *Col.* 2. 13. *Having forgiven you all treſpaſſes.* And *Heb.* 8. 12. *I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſſes, and their ſins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* I will be merciful, not to this unrighteouſneſs, or the other, but to all their unrighteouſneſſes, to their ſins, and

to

to their iniquities. It is ſpoken of in general terms, that they might know it will reach every particular. It is a full diſcharge, in ſo much as the believer is counted righteous, he is conſtituted righteous before God, *Heb.* 11. 4. *By faith* Abel *offered unto God a more excellent ſacrifice then* Cain, *by which he obtained witneſs that he was righteous*; that is in his juſtification in Chriſt Jeſus, in which juſtification he had abſolution, and in the compleatneſs of his juſtification before God, by Gods imputative act he was reckoned, he was conſtituted righteous.

4. *The diſcharge that God gives out to thoſe in Chriſt, it is irrevocable.* It is ſuch an act of grace, as God will abide by, as God will never recede from, no not to eternity, therefore he ſaies, *Jeremiah* 31. 34. *I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their ſins no more.* The believer he is afraid it may be that ſomething may be brought in againſt him at laſt, that after-reckonings may undo all: No, ſaies God, when I forgive ſin, I do it with this reſolve of grace, never to remember it more; and therefore, *Pſal.* 103. 12. *As far as the eaſt is from the weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us*; eaſt and weſt can never meet together, ſo the ſins of a believer that are forgiven by God ſhall never return again, never return again to his Condemnation. The ſenſe of them may return again and again for his humiliation, but the ſins themſelves ſhall never return again unto Condemnation; for God having once blotted them out, will never more write them down: therefore, *Rom.* 11. 29. *The gifts and callings of God*

are

are without repentance. God doth all in wiſdom, in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, he knows what he doth, he ſees all before, and he ſees after at once, and therefore there can never be any repentance in God, for him to recede from his own act of grace, but having once abſolved the poor ſinner, he ſhall remain ſo to eternity, *Micah* 7. 19. *Thou wilt caſt their iniquities into the depth of the Sea.* That which is thrown in at the Havens mouth, may be waſht up again, but now take a milſtone, and carry it into the vaſt Ocean, and caſt it into the depth of the Sea, and it will never be ſeen more, and thus the Lord, to illuſtrate his own grace, doth make uſe of ſuch compariſons, to ſpeak to our underſtanding. This act of his grace is done in Judgment, and God will never repent of it; it is an irrevocable act.

Rom. 8. 1.

There is therefore now no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.

WE made entrance upon theſe words, and gave you this Propoſition from them.

Doct. *That all thoſe that are in Chriſt, are acquitted, abſolved, and diſcharged by God.*

We

We have given you the properties of this diſcharge that God gives out unto the believer in Chriſt. And ſhall now proceed.

Object. *But you will ſay, if that believers be thus fully, and irrevocably diſcharged by* God; *how comes it to paſs, that they are the perſons that God doth ſo much afflict in the world, that they are ſeldom free, but followed with adverſity upon adverſity, trial upon trial, and yet all their ſins done away?*

Anſ. I anſwer: *Though Gods People are the People of affliction and adverſity, ordinarily in the world, yet their afflictions are not from wrath, but from love, and conſiſtent with his pardoning grace*; you muſt diſtinguiſh between puniſhments that are *ſatisfactory*, and puniſhments that are *monitory*. You muſt diſtinguiſh between wrathful proceeds from juſtice, and fatherly corrections and chaſtiſements. God doth afflict his people upon two accounts in the world, ſometimes for ſin, and ſometimes for the trial of grace; God (I grant) doth ſometimes *Chaſtiſe his people for ſin*; that Scripture clears it to me, *Pſal.* 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. *If his Children forſake my law, and walk not in my Judgements, if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I viſit their tranſgreſſions with rods, and their iniquity with ſtripes; nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail*, &c. Here you ſee God doth chaſtiſe for ſin, he hath reſerved to himſelf a power ſo to do, that if his Children break his law, if they tranſgreſs, and walk contrary to it, they ſhall hear of it, they ſhall feel the ſmart of his rod; ay, but it is ſuch a chaſtiſement, and viſitation,

as

as is conſiſtent with the ſtability of his Covenant, for that is not ſhaken thereby; it is ſuch a chaſtiſement as is conſiſtent with unchangeable love and grace; and by theſe afflictions, God carries on his work in them, the more to humble them, and to recover the Soul, and to bring it to a due conſideration of its ſelf and waies, in order unto a cloſer walking with God, and ſometimes again, *afflictions are for the exerciſe, the trial, and the improvement of grace*, and all that God might be the more glorified, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. *Now for a ſeaſon if need be, ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations, that the tryal of your faith being much more precious than that of Gold that periſheth, may be found unto praiſe and honour*, &c. Afflictions ſtir up patience, and patience that encreaſeth experience, and experience hope; ſo as under the trial grace is made to abound, and much glory is brought forth to God.

Obj. *Ay, but you will ſay further; The believer is taken near to God and forgiven, but he ſins again, don't his renewed tranſgreſſions break his pardon?*

Anſ. *Renewed and repeated tranſgreſſions, they are found in thoſe whom God pardons, and they may break their peace, and take away the comfort of their pardon, but they don't null the pardon of God.* Their pardon that is continued, that is renewed as their tranſgreſſions are renewed; ſo as the obligation to puniſhment, obligation to Hell, and the wrath of God, that returns no more upon their head; really before God it returns no more, for the pardon that is given forth of God takes it off, but the ſenſe of the pardon, and all the com-

comforts of the pardon may be loſt for a conſiderable while. This ſeems clear to me from that of the Prophet, 2 *Sam.* 12.13. David *ſaid unto* Nathan, *I have ſinned againſt the Lord.* And *Nathan* ſaid unto *David, The Lord alſo hath put away thy ſin, thou ſhalt not die.* God had blotted out the ſin of *David,* and yet if you look into the 51 *Pſalm,* you will find there that the comfort of his pardon was gone, he was not able to read it, nor to make Faith, nor to take any joy from it. O ſays he, *Verſe* 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs,* That ſeems to be a ſtrange voice in his ears; the voice of joy and gladneſs, that he had ſo often heard from the Lord; he was a ſtranger to. O! ſays he, that I could hear that voice again. *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy Salvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit, V.* 12. The joy of his pardon was out of ſight, and till God returned again to him, with freſh conſolations; and till the Comforter came again to viſit him, he was not able to apply a Promiſe, nor to take in the comfort of his pardon, although the Prophet had told him, that God had pardoned him. But the obligation to condemnation that doth not return: For, ſays the Apoſtle, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.* Chriſt lieth there in Heaven, to ſecure the ſtate of a Believer, and he keeps up the torrent and ſtream of God's love to the Soul, though the manifeſtations of that love are under a ſoveraign over-rule and diſpoſe. But

3. *We propoſed to give you the ground upon which God doth proceed in the giving out of this diſcharge unto thoſe that are in Chriſt.* And that is, *the merits and the ſatisfaction, the propitiation and atone-*

ment

ment of Chriſt himſelf. I ſay, the grounds, or the meritorious and procuring cauſe of all is, the propitiation and ſatisfaction of Jeſus Chriſt. God the Father pardons, but he muſt pardon with an honour to his Juſtice; he muſt pardon in ſuch a way as may ſecure the glory of all the Eſſential Properties of his Nature made known to man, either in the firſt Covenant that is broken, or in the ſecond, in which forgiveneſs is promiſed. And that muſt be upon a full ſatisfaction. Now, Jeſus Chriſt he became unto God a Surety for Sinners, and he took our ſins upon himſelf, and having made ſatisfaction, God diſcharges upon the ſatisfaction, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* We are made the righteouſneſs of God in him, becauſe the Father hath made him to be ſin for us. The Father was pleaſed to take our ſins, and to lay them upon Chriſt, to charge them upon him, and he bore the puniſhment, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. *Who his own ſelf bore our ſins in his own body.* Jeſus was herein a Sin-offering unto God, like the Scape-Goat that was but a type of him, *Lev* 16. 21. Aaron *the Prieſt ſhall come and lay both his hands upon the head of the Goat, and confeſs over him all the iniquities of the children of* Iſrael, *and all their tranſgreſſions, and all their ſins, putting them upon the head of the Goat, and then ſending it away.* And this belongs to Chriſt, and the Prophet doth particularly apply it to him, *Iſa.* 53. 6. *And the Lord hath laid on him (or the Lord hath made to meet upon him) the iniquities of us all.* He hath charged all the ſin of our nature, and the ſin of our lives upon him; he charges all our unbelief, and all our impatience, and all our aberrations and wanderings, both of one kind and

of another; he charges them all upon him. Now hereupon is there *a blotting out of the hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us*, Col. 2. 14. *that was contrary to us, and took it out of the way.* God the Father comes and blots out all, but it is upon the ſatisfaction that Jeſus Chriſt gives unto Juſtice; it was upon the price that the Son of God paid to the Father: Hereupon ſays the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3.25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt*, &c. And *we are juſtified freely by his grace*, ſays the Apoſtle. And *Act.* 13.38. *That through this man (that is, the man Jeſus) is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins.* And *Eph.* 1.7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins.* Redemption from the Law, Redemption from the rigour of Juſtice, Redemption from all the wrath of God; this we have through the blood of Jeſus. *We are*, V. 6. *accepted in the Beloved.* We are pardoned, we are conſtituted righteous, but it is in Chriſt, Chriſt Jeſus is therefore *made righteouſneſs to us, as he was made ſin for us, ſo we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Righteouſneſs from Chriſt, through Chriſt, and in Chriſt, is imputed unto us; ſo as God doth all this upon the merits and ſatisfaction, and the atonement of his own Son.

Queſt. *If God doth pardon ſinners in Chriſt, and diſcharge them of all their tranſgreſſions through his blood; then doth not God ſee ſin in his People? Do his People ſin, and are they not ſinners before him?*

Anſ. I anſwer; *That God doth ſee all the ſin that all his People are guilty of; they cannot ſin unknown to God*; he ſees every provocation in the heart, and he ſees every ſtep that is ſet out of the path of his Com-

Commandments. But the Lord he doth look upon his People in Christ: As they are considered in themselves, so they sin against him; but now he accepts them in the Beloved; God sees them in him, and so covers all their iniquities and transgressions. Look as it was with Christ, God the Father saw no sin in Christ, for he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; there was no sin found in him: God saw Christ without sin, that is, as he was in himself; but as he was our Surety, so God laid sin upon him, and God saw sin that was upon him; God did put him under obligations to die for our transgressions; and as he was our Surety, so sin was charged upon him. Now God the Father, as we are in our selves, sees us that we sin daily. But as we are in Christ, so we are without sin. So the grace of God in forgiveness is carried on from day to day, notwithstanding our daily failings and imperfections. Well,

4. We proposed to consider, *when a Soul cometh to be received into this priviledge, when he is pardoned and discharged by God*; and that is, *when he comes to believe, and to lay hold upon Jesus Christ by faith.* I look upon pardon under a threefold Consideration.

First, *In the decree of it*, and so it is eternal, for it breaks out of the eternal Counsels of God.

Secondly, Pardon is to be considered *in the purchase of it*, and that was in the fulness of time, when Christ was made a Sin-offering to God.

Thirdly, Pardon is to be considered *in the application of it*, and that is, when a Soul is enabled by the Almighty Power of God to go over unto Jesus Christ, and to believe on him, *Act.* 13. 39. *And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the Law of* Moses. When they were under the Law of *Moses*, they could not be justi-

fied. The Scripture tells us, there was a time when those that are now discharged, were condemned. The Scripture is abundant in the testimony of this, *Ephes.* 2. 3. *And were by nature children of wrath even as others.* There is no difference naturally between you that are pardoned, and them that are gone down to Hell. There is no difference in your childhood, no difference in your grown Age, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. The Apostle there reckons up very great sinners, and such, says he, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. And *such were some of you, but now ye are washed, but now ye are justified.* Ye were under the sentence of condemnation, as well as others, but now ye are washed, now ye are pardoned, now that ye believe; therefore the righteousness by which we are justified, is called *the righteousness of faith*, Rom. 9. v. 30. *What shall we say then, that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.* It is the righteousness of faith, because it is apprehended by faith on the Soul's part; it is taken hold of by faith, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Being justified by faith we have peace with God.* So as until the Soul comes to believe, to have this faith to rely on the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness, he is not justified, *Gal.* 3. 22. *The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith on Jesus Christ might be given to those that believe.* All concluded under sin, all under the sentence of condemnation; every Child that is born into the world, is concluded under sin, concluded under the sentence of condemnation by reason of sin. But now the promise of Salvation is by faith on Jesus Christ; the promise of salvation and forgiveness, the promise of righteousness and peace, this *is given unto them that believe.* So as when the sinner is translated, when he is brought over to Christ, when he hath faith wrought in him on the Lord Jesus Christ, then

is

is he pardoned. And upon the loss of your pardon (I mean the sense of it) upon the renewal of faith, and the stirring up of fresh acts of faith, is the sense of the pardon returned, and consolation and joy upon the pardon returned.

Use 1. In the first place; If that God do thus discharge sinners in Christ, *then this calls upon all of you to study this discharge of the Gospel more fully*, that so you may understand this wonderful proceed of Gospel grace. Sirs, this point is a fundamental point; it is one of the foundational truths and principles of the Gospel; and therefore whatever you neglect, do not neglect the study of this mystery. There are other truths that are of great concernment. There is no truth, no principle of the Gospel, but is worth your enquiring into: But this is one of the main, and if you be out here, you are out in all; and the more you know of this, the more savingly you understand this priviledge, the more will you be led into others, and the higher will your consolation be. This is even a *Benjamin*, as I may so call it. When *Joseph* came to serve his Brethren, *Gen.* 43. 34. *He sent Messes to them from his board, and* Benjamin's *Mess was five times as much as any of the other.* Truly the importance and concernment of this truth is such, that you had need study this point five times more than some others, so much hath a dependance upon it. Says the Apostle, 1 *Joh.* 4. 9. *In this was the love of God manifested*, to provide a propitiation and atonement, to provide a blood through which forgiveness of sins should be dispensed; in this is the love of God manifest, and you should study this truth, that you may understand something of the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God manifested unto you herein. Dive into this mystery.

Use 2. *Labour to clear up your own discharge unto your own Souls.* Many are the doubts and the fears that Believers labour under; and they do arise from their darkness in this point: Could they but make faith of this, That there is no condemnation for them, their fears would vanish, their doubts would be answered, and their Souls would be filled with the joy of God their Salvation. Now there are some waies whereby this may be cleared up: As

1. *There is the Witness of the Spirit of God*; and this is a satisfying testimony unto all that have it. It puts all out of doubt, and answers a thousand scruples at once; when once the testimony of the Spirit comes within, all fears they vanish, all mists and clouds that were about the understanding, they all flee away and are scattered.

2. *It is evidenced by a lively faith in the promise of forgiveness*; and from thence the Soul is enabled to take in the comfort of the discharge. And

3. *Sometimes our Justification is cleared up unto us from our Sanctification.* But truly that satisfaction that comes in to a Soul through his searches into the work of Sanctification in the Soul, that satisfaction it is but small; it is coming & going, because the work of grace upon our hearts is under so much weakness, and oftentimes cloudy and dark, that a Believer many times can hardly tell whether he hath any grace or no in his heart; but now that that comes in by the help of the Spirit of God through the actings of faith upon the promise of forgiveness, & that which comes in through the immediate testimony of the Spirit of God in our hearts, this is far more refreshing and more satisfying to the Soul. Well, labour after the assurance of this discharge, that you may know that you have a part in the promise of forgiveness.

Use 3.

Use 3. *You that are forgiven, you whom the Lord hath thus discharged, you ought to walk thankfully, and to live in the admiration of that grace that is glorified in this act of God towards you,* Psal. 116. 12. *What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* We should say so upon all our common mercies, though never so small; What shall I render to the Lord? *I will take up the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the* Name *of the Lord.* This is that we should say for ordinary mercies, but what shall we say to the Lord for greater mercies? Thou hast been brought up in a Land of Vision, it may be under a religious education, and hast sat under a powerful Gospel Ministry, where thou hast been told of thy sins, and invited and called to return to God, and exhorted to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet it may be thou wentest on in a way of sinning against God, ten, twenty, thirty years before God laid hold upon thee, and after such a long course of rebellion, and after that thou hadst run out in all manner of extravagancy, or at least in thy heart didst commit all manner of iniquity, and hadst it in thy heart to do a great deal more than the preventing grace of God would suffer thee, and after all this disobedience and rebellion, in a moment as it were, God comes and pardons all. The Prodigal, a great rebel, and yet received and embraced in his Father's arms, and not one word objected against him, but received as if he had never grieved his Father, embraced as if he had never crost his Father, as if he had never gone out of his Fathers house; what wonderful grace is this! Sirs, it is stupendious grace, for God to make his approach to a poor Soul, and to press forgiveness upon it; for God as a thick cloud to blot out thy transgressions; as *Isa.* 44. *v.* 22. I *have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions.* The Lord hath blotted out as a thick cloud

thy tranſgreſſions, and hath cauſed the Sun of his love to break through, and to ſcatter all at once. You ſhould admire the greatneſs of God's grace, that ſo many treaſons ſhould be forgiven at once, that ſo many years tranſgreſsion againſt God ſhould be forgiven at once. I remember when the ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt were ſpoken of; when he ſaw what a cup of wrath there was in his Fathers hand, it is ſaid, he was amazed and aſtoniſhed, when he ſaw all the wrath that was to be poured out upon him. And was Jeſus Chriſt amazed when he ſaw all the wrath that was to be poured out upon him? And do you ſee all the grace that the Goſpel hath brought forth for you? Do you ſee all this grace, and doth it not amaze you? That God ſhould do ſo much for ſuch a ſinner as you are, for one ſo unworthy, for one ſo undeſerving, for one ſo provoking as you are. I remember how *Abigail* was taken with the kindneſs and condeſcenſion of *David*, when he ſent to her to take her, 1 *Sam.* 25.41. *She aroſe and bowed her ſelf on her face to the Earth, and ſaid, Behold, let thine Handmaid be a ſervant to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my Lord.* O what! Doth King *David* ſend to me? What! *David* the the Lord's Anointed ſend after me? It is more than I deſerve, ſhould he make me but a Handmaid to waſh the feet of his ſervants; ſhe was amazed at his love and condeſcenſion. And Sirs, Doth not all the grace of God that is laid out on you, in freeing you from Hell, and in blotting out of all your tranſgreſsions, that they ſhall never be remembred againſt you: Doth not all this grace amaze you? I remember a paſſage of *Solomon*, 2 *King.* 8. 27. *When God afforded his preſence in the Temple*, but, ſays he, *Will God indeed dwell on the Earth? Behold the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him, how much leſs the houſe that I have*

have builded! Will God indeed dwell on the Earth? O! he was taken with the condeſcenſion of grace, that God ſhould ſtoop ſo low as to fill that houſe with his glory that he had built for him. O Sirs! hath God filled your hearts with his glory? with the glory of his pardoning love and grace? O ſay, what! Lord, Wilt thou dwell with me? What! Lord, Doſt thou paſs by all my rebellion, and all my backſlidings, and wilt thou receive me into thy love and favour? O! do you magnifie, and admire, and live in the admiration of this grace that hath thus wrought for you!

Uſe 4. Hath the Lord pardoned and diſcharged your Souls, that there is now no condemnation for you, *Think with your ſelves what returns of love you ought to make unto this God that hath done ſo much for you.* If you were taken captive by the *Turks*, and were cruelly uſed in their bondage, and a friend ſhould hear of your miſery and captivity, and ſhould come to you, and pay the price of your Redemption, and ſet you free, and bring you home into your own Country, you would never forget the love of this man, if you had any gratefulneſs in you. I am ſure you could not, but all the love that you could manifeſt to him, you would alwaies think too little, and would come far ſhort of his to you. But Sirs, what is the love of ſuch a friend in ſuch a caſe unto the love of God in your Soul's caſe! he hath taken off the ſentence of condemnation that was againſt you, when you were ready to die; he ſaved you from wrath and Hell, and aſſured you that none of your ſins ſhould ever riſe up to your condemnation; not any thing ſhall ever be laid to your charge, becauſe God hath diſcharged you; all that you can do for this God is but to love him, and you will manifeſt ungratefulneſs indeed if you do not ſtir up your love to this God, *Pſal.* 31. 23. *O love the Lord all*

all ye his Saints! Ay! they have reaſon to do it; What! ſaved from Hell! delivered from going down to the Pit! thouſands and thouſands of tranſgreſſions forgiven at once! O! it becomes thoſe that are thus dealt withal to love God. Sirs, you ſhould love him with a heart-love; you ſhould love the Lord with all your hearts, and with all your ſouls; here the whole ſtrength of your affections ſhould go out; you ſhould love God with a tranſcendent love; you ſhould love him above all; you ſhould love him with an abounding love. It is ſaid of *Mary*, that *ſhe loved much*, Luk. 7. 47. *Wherefore I ſay unto thee, her ſins which are many are forgiven her, for ſhe loved much.* Many ſins forgiven, and much love, aboundings of love upon it. The higher your ſins were, the greater is your pardon, and the greater ſhould your love be; you ſhould love God with a love of complacency, ſo as to joy in him, and to take up your delight in him. God loves you with ſuch a love. He is ſaid to *reſt in his love towards us*, Zeph. 3. 17. *The Lord thy God in the midſt of thee is mighty, he will ſave thee, he will rejoyce over thee with joy, he will reſt in his love.* Now, ſhall God take complacency in ſuch a poor vile creature as thou art, and do ſo much in the greatneſs of his love for thee, and wilt not thou take up thy delight in God? You ſhould love God with an abiding love; you ſhould dwell in your love to God; you ſhould live in love to God. Says the Apoſtle, *Jude v. 21. Keep your ſelves in the love of God.* Your love to God you ſhould love and cheriſh at all times, that you ſhould alwaies live in love to God, and you ſhould do all that you do in love to God; love him with an abiding love.

Uſe 5. Again; You whom the Lord hath diſcharged, *be alwaies ready to diſcharge and forgive others, wherein they provoke and offend you.* As the Apoſtle ſays

ſays concerning love, 1 *Joh.* 4.11. *Beloved, if God ſo loved us, we ought alſo to love one another.* So I may ſay in this caſe, if God hath forgiven us, we ought to forgive one another. *Solomon* tells us, (and truly I think it is a Scripture that a great many do not underſtand in the practice of it) *Prov.* 19.11. *That it is the glory of a man to paſs over a tranſgreſſion.* Many do not think ſo; but they think that it is the nobleneſs of their ſpirits to ſtand to it, and to argue out the point, and to have ſatisfaction upon ſuch an injury, and ſuch an injury; or upon ſuch a provocation, and ſuch a provocation; and he is counted of a poor puſillanimous ſpirit that paſſeth over ſuch things, that will bear affronts, and make nothing of them. But ſays *Solomon*, *It is the glory.* It is the crown of a man to do it, becauſe the more you forgive others, the more you manifeſt the ſenſe of the grace of God in forgiving you. We are taught of Chriſt to pray, *Luk.* 11.4. *Forgive us our debts as we alſo forgive every one that is indebted to us.* Canſt thou ſay ſo in thy heart, when thou goeſt unto God for forgiveneſs, that thou haſt forgiven freely thy Brother, thy Siſter, thy Neighbour, that hath offended thee, that hath wronged and injured thee? *Luk.* 17. 3, 4. *Take heed to your ſelves, if thy Brother treſpaſs againſt thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him; and if he treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times a day, and ſeven times in a day turn again to thee, ſaying, I repent, thou ſhalt forgive him.* And *Mat.* 18.23, &c. The Lord there gives us a Parable of a Servant. *The Lord had compaſſion on him, and forgave him the debt, and the ſame ſervant went out to his fellow-ſervant that owed him an hundred pence, and he took him by the throat, ſaying, pay me that thou oweſt me,* &c. Here is ſet forth the ſpirit of the children of men, they would have forgiveneſs from others, but they will not forgive themſelves. Well,

but

but when *Peter* came to Chriſt, and ſaid, *Lord, how often ſhall my Brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him? till ſeven times? Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee, until ſeven times, but until 70 times 7.* As often as he doth offend, ſo often thou ſhalt forgive.

Uſe 6. Again; This Doctrine calls for an abhorrence of all Papal Maſſes, as propitiatory Sacrifices for ſin. You that have heard any thing of the grace of God, in the forgiveneſs of the New Covenant, do you deteſt and defie the Idolatry and the abominations of the Church of *Rome*, who would pretend to forgive ſins: What is this but to wrong the grace of God? What is this but to trample upon the blood of the Covenant as an inſufficient thing? No, pardon of ſin doth not come in at ſo cheap a rate, as to be bought with money, but it comes in at the door of free Grace, through the blood of Jeſus. Thouſands of Rams, & ten thouſand of Rivers of Oil; the firſt-born of the body for the ſin of the Soul, will not ſatisfie, for they and their money will periſh together, that would buy pardon of ſin with ſuch a price. Bleſs God that you know better, and let it raiſe up in you an abhorrence of that Religion that would thus corrupt you.

Queſt. *Ay, But ſome poor Soul will be ſaying, Ah! But how ſhall I come to get God's diſcharge ſealed upon my Soul? O! had I but the evidence and witneſs of this, all would be well.*

Anſ. 1. In the firſt place; *Come before God with confeſſions in thy mouth.* Bewail and ſpread thy tranſgreſſions before him, *Pſal* 32. 5. Says *David, I acknowledged my ſin unto thee, and my iniquity have I not hid: I ſaid I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord, and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin.* I confeſt, ſays he, and I ſaid I would confeſs: He came and judged himſelf before God; he came and lamented his ſinful

ſinful condition, and his ſin-guiltineſs before God; he lamented and bewailed, he poured out his confeſſions before God, and the Lord he came and viſited his Soul with pardon, with the ſenſe of forgiveneſs.

2. *Plead with God for his pardon, and urge his promiſe for forgiveneſs.* This is that which the ſervants of the Lord have done, when they have wanted the ſenſe of pardon, *Pſal.* 51. 1. *Have mercy upon me O God! according to thy loving-kindneſs, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my tranſgreſſions.* When ſin lay againſt *Iſrael*, & God began to threaten, *Moſes* ſteps up and pleads with God for pardon, that God would pardon their ſin. So the Servants of the Lord have all along pleaded with God for pardon in the want of it: Do you do thus, and urge God with his promiſe of forgiveneſs.

3. *Have your Eye upon Jeſus Chriſt.* Pardon comes through his blood; it is merited, it is purchaſed by Jeſus Chriſt; look unto him, and put forth renewed acts of faith upon him; and in the renewing of thy cloſe with him, and in the reſignation of thy ſelf by faith to him, thou mayeſt come to have thy pardon ſealed.

4. *Wait upon God in ſealing Ordinances.* It may be thou haſt wronged thy Soul to this day, that thou haſt walked at ſo great a diſtance from God in his ſealing Ordinances; if thou hadſt gone thither, and attended upon God, it may be thou hadſt had ſome hint of his pardoning love to thee that would have more ſatisfied thy Soul. I remember what God ſaid to *Gideon*, I only allude to it, *Judg.* 7. 10, 11. *Go and liſten*, ſays he, *and thou ſhalt hear ſomething that will ſtrengthen thee.* So I ſay, wait upon God in thoſe Ordinances where God gives out ſtrengthening grace, and where God ſeals up his love to his People, and there thou mayeſt have ſomething that may be

be a feaſt to thy Soul; there mayeſt thou meet with ſomething that may confirm this love of God to thy Soul, and put all out of doubt more to thee than ever.

And you that have the ſenſe of God's diſcharging love in your hearts, I have two or three words to leave with you.

1. *Improve it, improve the ſenſe of it unto an influence to all duties, and to all obedience to God.* Let the ſenſe of his kindneſs to you, be ſo improved and wrought upon your hearts, as it may conſtrain you to devote and dedicate your ſelves to God in your whole courſe; to lay out your ſelves in all duties of obedience to God more than ever. And know, that you can never ſerve this God enough; you can never do for this God enough, that hath done ſo much for you; labour to do more for him than ever, and to ſerve him with a better heart, and with a better ſpirit; to pray more in your prayers; to pray with more fervency, and to confeſs with more ſincerity, and to walk with God in more exactneſs; lay out your ſelves to the utmoſt in this work.

2. *Extend your pity and compaſſion unto thoſe that are yet in a condemned ſtate.* Your Souls ſhould mourn over thoſe that are yet in their ſins: You know what it is to be under ſin, and you know what it is to be under grace, and therefore your hearts ſhould be full of compaſſion to thoſe that are yet in that ſtate, that by grace you are delivered from. *Ebedmelech's* compaſsion and tenderneſs to the Prophet is recorded, *Jer.* 38. 11. *That he took men with him, and went into the houſe of the King under the Treaſury, and took with him old caſt clouts, and old rotten raggs, and let them down with Cords into the Dungeon to* Jeremiah. O Sirs! your bowels ſhould work towards thoſe that

are

are yet in their ſins. I remember what *David* promiſeth to God, *Pſal.* 51. 12, 13: *Reſtore to me th Joy of thy Salvateon, and uphold me with thy free Spirit, then ſhall I teach tranſgreſſors thy waies, and ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee.* He would then make it his buſineſs to turn ſinners to God; he would make it his buſineſs to convince and awaken, and draw others out of their ſinful ſtate; that is, to labour with them, if by any means the Spirit of God may work upon them; be you full of compaſsion to others in a ſtate of condemnation. And

3. And laſtly; *Keep up a humble ſenſe of your great tranſgreſſions that God hath forgiven you.* I ſay, keep up, and walk under a humble ſenſe of thoſe tranſgreſsions that God hath forgiven you: Sirs, though God hath forgiven your ſins, yet you ſhould remember them; you ſhould remember them ſo as to walk humbly and ſoftly before God all your daies, that you did ever provoke ſo gracious a God by ſuch heinous provocations and inormities.

FINIS.

A Catalogue of Books Printed for, and are to be ſold by Edward Giles *Bookſeller in* Norwich, *near the Market-place.*

A Diſcourſe of *Divine Providence.*

A Word in Seaſon.

Defenſive Armour.

A Diſcourſe of the *Ordinary Matter of Prayer.*

Sermons upon the whole firſt and ſecond Chapters of the *Canticles.*

Allen's Way of the Spirit in bringing Souls to Chriſt.

The *Glories of Chriſt* ſet forth, with the Neceſsity of Faith, in ſeveral Sermons: By *Thomas Allen* late of *Norwich.*

7 AP 53

Several Sermons of *Timothy Armitage* late of *Norwich.*

Lougher's Precious Promiſes, the Portion of Overcommers.

The *Saint's Ebenezer*: By *Francis Engliſh* late of *Norwich.*

Directions for the Learned to Spell Engliſh right.

The Hiſtory of the *Proteſtant Reformation*, as it was begun by *Luther.*

The *Dead Saints Speaking.*

A Sermon Preached upon the Death of Mr. *Newcomb.*

The *Engliſh Presbyterian.*